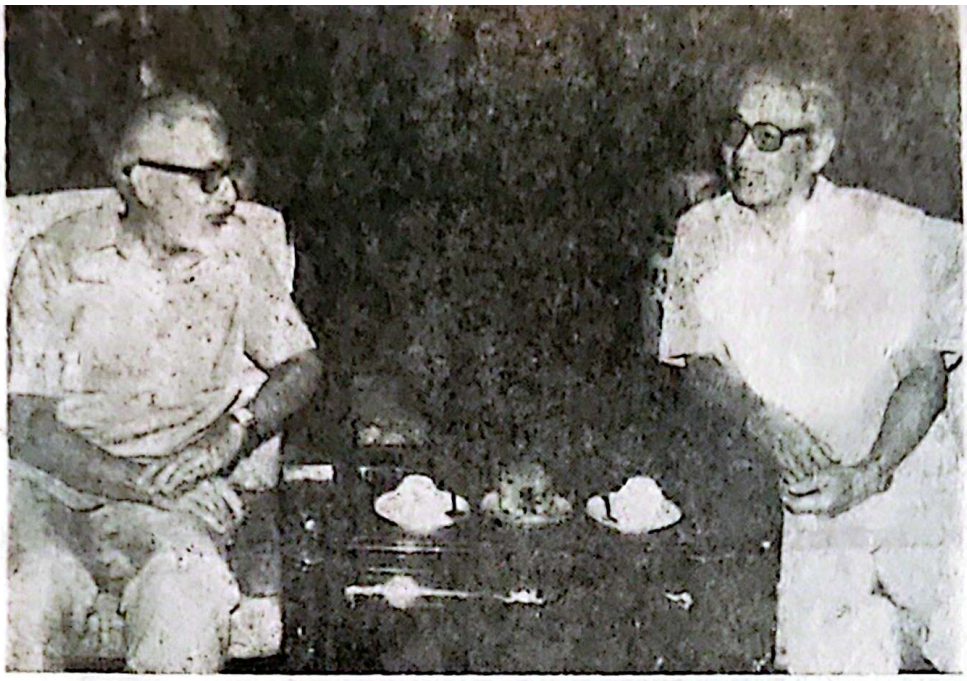
VIETNAM Courier

A MONTHLY REVIEW PUBLISHED IN ENGLISH, FRENCH AND RUSSIAN ★ 11/1988

- Objectives and Principles of the Non-Aligned Movement.
- To Boost Production in Non-State Economic Sectors.
- Taming a Reputedly Uncontrollable River.
- Pianist Dang Thai Son in Japan.

OUR GUESTS

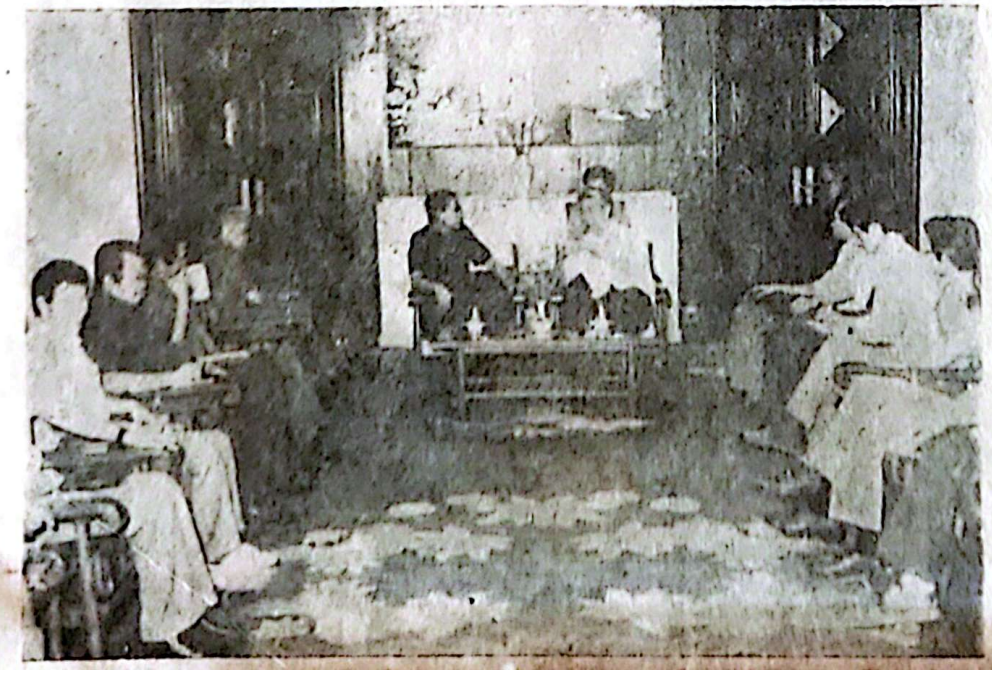


● *On 13 August, First Vice-Chairman of the Council of Ministers Vo Van Kiet (right) received Dr. M.R. Xrini Savan, Chairman of the Indian Nuclear Energy Commission, and head of an Indian delegation, on a visit to Vietnam.*

Photo: VU DINH HONG

● *President of the SRV State Council Vo Chi Cong (right) talking with Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister Abdul Ghafar Bin Baba on a friendship visit to Vietnam (27 August).*

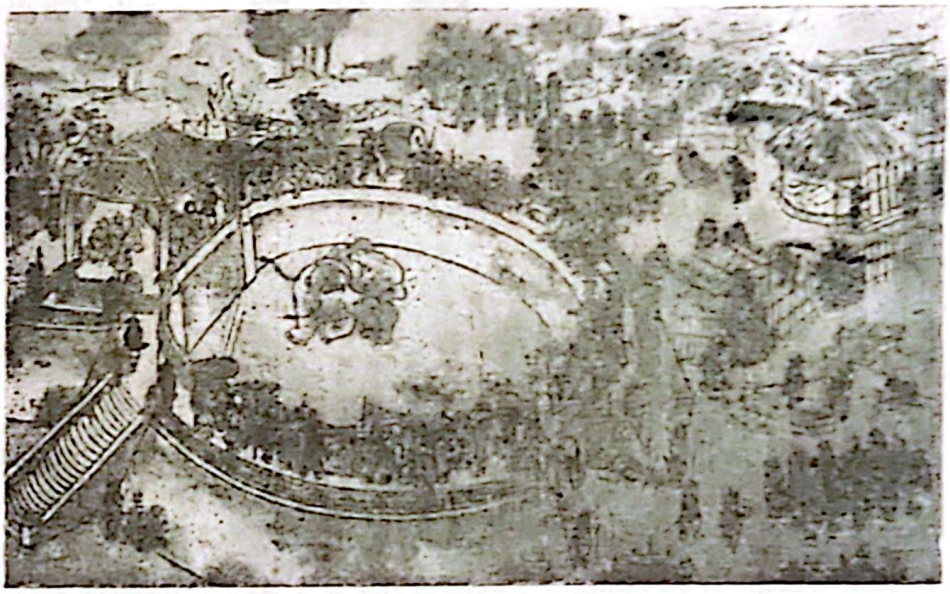
Photo: KIM HUNG



● *Nguyen Co Thach, Vice-Chairman of the SRV Council of Ministers and Foreign Minister receiving a delegation of the Indonesian Ministry of Information on a friendship visit to Vietnam (28 to 31 August).*

Photo: XUAN LAM

HUE ARTISTS IN HANOI



"Elephant fighting tiger", lacquer painting
by DO KY HOANG

In recent years, a kind of artistic dialogue has taken place among painters; works by artists in one city or region are displayed in others. The exhibition of works by three artists from Hue (Central Vietnam) in Hanoi in the North in August last is a case in point.

Do Ky Hoang, a lacquer painter, displayed 29 exhibits; his works on historical themes such as "Ho Quyen" (Tiger Arena) have drawn great interest. It depicts a fight between an elephant and a tiger in an arena. In the old days, this kind of exercise was aimed at toughening war elephants. The fight is attended by the king and his mandarins in ceremonial dress, portrayed by the painter against an imposing background. The bright colours give the scene a solemn character while evoking a seething atmosphere.

The 39 works of painter Vinh Phoi contain many experimental features. Such works as "Vieng di tich Hue" (Visiting Hue Relics), "Tieng dan dem trang" (Music in the Moonlight) are very skilful compositions. Some foreign landscapes leave viewers with favourable impressions such as "The Seine River", "The Girl in Rome". Particularly the artist shows remarkable skills in colour combination. Some of his oil paintings are as bright and glossy as glazed porcelain. His paintings move people's hearts by their sincerity and simplicity.

Unlike the above two painters, Truong Be rather likes abstract art. In Vietnam this trend is followed by relatively few artists. In "Chung tich chien tranh" (Traces of the War), death and destruction are depicted in a combination of grey masses. By means of contrasting colours and interwoven lines "Nhip the ky" (The Rhythm of the Century) expresses the multiple rhythm of life. On the other hand, such realistic paintings as "Me con" (Mother and Child), "Vu Khuc Dong Phuong" (Oriental Dance) evoke deep inner feelings.

Each in his own way, the three Hue artists have left Hanoi art lovers with unforgettable impressions stemming from their talents and personalities.

NGOC LAN

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The preparatory work for this issue was completed on 15 September 1988.

Front Cover: Pantomime actresses of the Youth Drama Company in Hanoi.

Photo: VU DIEU

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HEALTH CARE IN VIETNAM

TEN YEARS AFTER THE ALMA ATA DECLARATION

In September 1978, the World Health Organisation in collaboration with UNICEF organised an international symposium in Alma Ata (USSR) which adopted a strategy for primary health care. The conference issued the famous Alma Ata Declaration with the slogan "Health for All by the Year 2000". This call has received warm response from all nations and governments in the world.

In Vietnam, in spite of serious economic difficulties, the Communist Party and Government have given special attention to the primary health-care programme. Special allowances have been given the medical service for it to expand the health-care network, particularly at the grassroots. Vietnam now has ten thousand grassroots medical stations to look after primary health care, 765 hospitals, half of which are district polyclinics and 595 general consulting rooms, each for a group of communes. A vast long-term programme of cadre training and retraining has been launched by the Health Ministry to ensure better primary health care. As a result, dangerous epidemics have been kept under control and bacterial diseases have also decreased noticeably. In particular, there has been a close coordination between national and international health programmes, such as those against malaria, blindness, malnutrition, diarrhoea, bronchitis, that for expanded immunisation, and the ten-year programme for clean water.

On 23 August 1988, marking the 10th anniversary of the Alma Ata Declaration, a commemorative meeting was held by the Health Ministry, at which initial results in the realisation of the 10-year primary health-care programme were reported. The meeting was attended by representatives of the Office of the Council of Ministers, the Central Science and Education Commission of the Communist Party of Vietnam, the Ministry of Education, the Vietnam Women's Union, and the Vietnam Red Cross. Dr. S.T. Han, special representative of the General Director of WHO, and representatives of international organisations and of embassies of countries which have helped Vietnam in the medical field, were also present.

VAN HOA

THE HANOI ART SCHOOL

The Hanoi Art School was founded in 1967. In its first years, it gave training in music, dancing and painting to children aged 7-11. Later, in response to the increasing demand for training in these arts, the school opened courses in drama (spoken theatre, *cheo* (popular opera), *cai luong* (reformed opera), singing, and circus. In 1977, the school set up 7 branches in different districts of Hanoi. Starting with a staff of only 8 and a small number of students, it now has 60 administrators and teachers with university degrees and over 700 students. The school also dispenses elementary and secondary general education as well as training in the performing arts. Now the many disciplines taught at the school include musical theory and composition, drama (*cheo*, spoken theatre, *cai luong*), dancing, circus, puppetry... Also, for the first time in Vietnam, it gives systematic training in the performance of light music.

The Hanoi Art School, in cooperation with the Cultural College, has trained 25 directors and vice-directors for houses of culture in different districts, enterprises, and army units; 180 actors and actresses for theatrical troupes in the capital, many of whom have become artistes of repute: Quang Minh (circus), Thanh Van, Minh Hoa, Quang Hung (reformed drama), Duyen Thinh (song and dance), Nhu Quynh (reformed drama and cinema); and 159 cadres for the College of Drama and Cinema, the Cultural College, and the Music and Painting Teachers' School.

Students and alumni of the Hanoi Art School have been frequently present at artistic festivals and youth congresses and have always earned sympathetic applause from their audiences. The Vietnamese Central Television Station, the Voice of Vietnam Radio and the Voice of Hanoi Broadcasting Station, have on many occasions presented the disciplines taught at the school and some of its staff and students. The School has received many visitors from the Soviet Union, Laos, Kampuchea, Japan, France, Sweden, Indonesia, Congo, etc., and left them with excellent impressions of the quality of its work.

VAN HOA

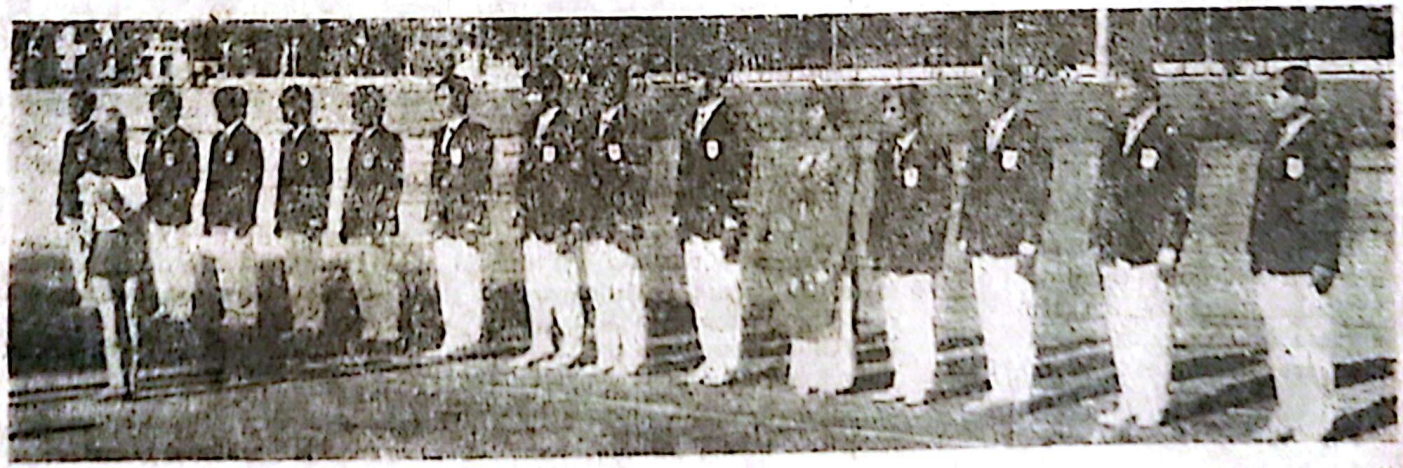
SPORTS :

VIETNAM AND THE OLYMPIC MOVEMENT

In recent years, the International Olympic Committee has taken a number of steps to help promote sports activities in Vietnam. The recent organization of an "Olympic Solidarity Course" for Vietnamese sports leaders was one such step.

This course, sponsored by the Olympic Solidarity Fund, was run by two IOC experts — Carlos Gancedo, of Spain and Lorenz Becker, of West Germany.

The 35 participants were senior cadres in charge of management, research and training at the



Vietnamese athletes before leaving for the Seoul Olympic Games.
Photo: PHAN SANG

General Department of Sports and Physical Culture and its branches in Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City, Hai Phong and Nghia Binh.

The course dealt with 13 subjects of interest to sports leaders. Besides the IOC experts, there were also Vietnamese lecturers: Ta Quang Chien, Nguyen The Hao and Dao Duy Thu.

One of the subjects treated was how to improve the physical fitness of school pupils and train qualified coaches. Much remains to be done in these fields in Vietnam.

The IOC experts let it be known that in the coming period IOC will help Vietnam organize refresher courses for Vietnamese sports leaders and train coaches in some sports fields.

Since Vietnam took part for the first time in the International Olympic Congress in 1980, sports activities in Vietnam have undergone some development. Foreign coaches have been invited to Vietnam to train young athletes. One case in point is boxing. With the assistance of Cuban coaches, boxing has recently made notable progress. The winning by Dang Hieu Hien of a bronze medal at the '88 Moa Boxing Tournament in Cuba was the first encouraging result. In preparation for the Games of the 24th Olympiad in Seoul, Vietnamese marksmen, swimmers and track-and-field athletes were sent to the USSR, the GDR, Bulgaria and Hungary for further training.

Though their strength and skills are still not quite equal to international standards the ten Vietnamese athletes going to Seoul this time are determined to do their best.

For Vietnamese athletes to be able to distinguish themselves at Olympic Games and other world tournaments, many problems will have to be resolved. This will be discussed on another occasion.

DO NGOC

FOR SOCIAL-ECONOMIC RENEWAL

HIGH-QUALITY GOODS STORE

Over the last few years, the words "productivity, quality, efficiency" posted in every store and shop, have become a quasi-empty slogan, for producers and consumers alike: large quantities of substandard and counterfeit goods are on sale everywhere not only on the free market but also in state-run stores as a result of collusion between dishonest traders and corrupt members of their staff. Local production shrinks while the market is swamped with foreign-made goods. Home-made goods are looked upon with more and more suspicion by the consumers.

One year ago, in the 10th district of Ho Chi Minh City, someone in the home trade services put forward the idea of setting up stores selling exclusively high-quality-home-made goods, particularly articles having won prizes at annual fair-exhibitions. On 26 April 1988, with the permission of the Ministry of Home Trade, at the Ngo Gia Tu department store in the 10th district, was inaugurated a special counter selling "only high-quality goods", as an experimental step.

Within a matter of weeks positive results were recorded, the greatest of which being that for the first time in years, a State store was widely known to be selling only high-quality goods with warranties attached. This was a strong encouragement for honest manufacturers, proud of having their products displayed in the store. Conversely, manufacturers who could not get their products accepted by the store, felt somewhat ashamed of themselves. In any event the consumers felt quite satisfied and gave the store their enthusiastic patronage.

Whenever a defect is discovered in an item bought at the store the customers have the right to return it and get a refund. The manufacturers will then seek to improve the quality and presentation of their products also to make them suit the tastes of the consumers.

The store has become a solid link between consumers and producers and is able to dispense with the services of middlemen... It also provides reliable guidance — technical and aesthetic — to the consumers and, on their behalf may put pressure on the manufacturers to apply ever more advanced technologies in the production of their goods. It has also helped in the elimination of dishonest manufacturers and traders.

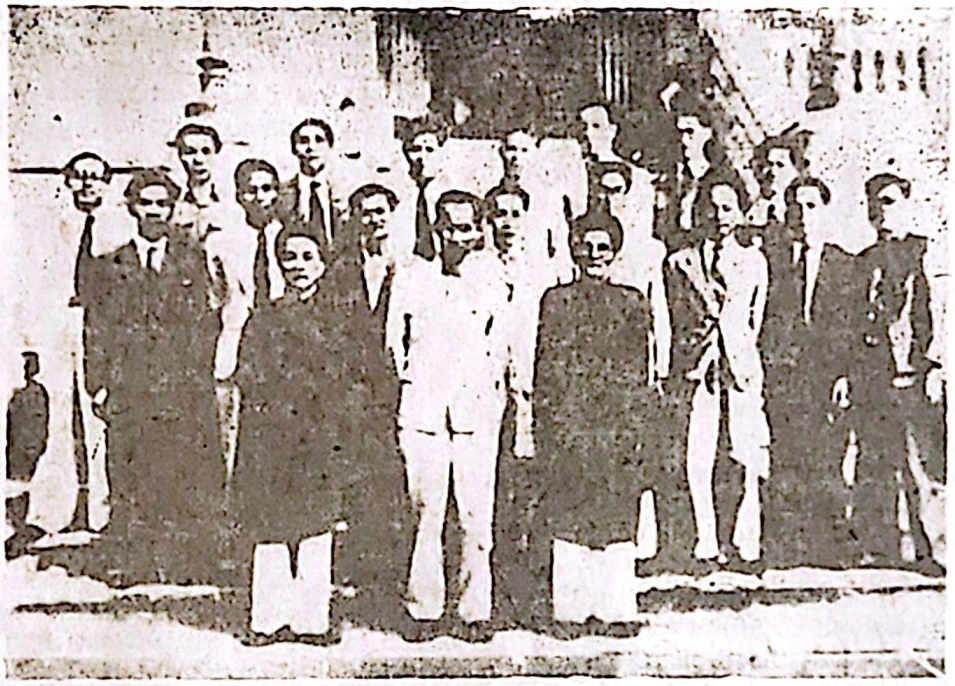
By now, about forty producers have their products displayed at the store. Customers have expressed their satisfaction with such products sold at the store as Gio Nam electric fans, television sets, radio sets, Covina electric cooking pots, vacuum flasks, watches and clocks, electronic amplifiers, Cuu Long bicycles, etc.

Sale prices are about 5-10% higher than current prices, but customers do not complain for the quality of the goods is guaranteed, and give the store steady custom. Tuc, the manager of the Ngo Gia Tu store, let us know that ever since inauguration day, the daily turnover at this special counter has amounted to one million dong. The assistants are elated by the bonuses as well as the moral satisfaction they derive from its success.

TRIEU XUAN

AUGUST 1945: WELCOMING PRESIDENT HO CHI MINH TO HANOI

(Reminiscences by TRUONG-CHINH)



President Ho Chi Minh with delegates to the First National Assembly of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (January 1946).

Photo: VNA

In early 1945, the situation in the world and in Vietnam evolved very rapidly. Three political trends appeared in our country: the first was that the Vietnamese people were to oppose both the Japanese fascists and the French colonialists; the second held that they could make use of the Japanese to recover their independence and freedom; the third, that they could get the French Gaullists to recognize their country's autonomy. The last two trends of thought were erroneous. At that time, our immediate enemy was the Japanese military fascists, but there also appeared the danger of the French colonialists under De Gaulle seeking to reconquer our country. In those circumstances the struggle to get the Party's correct viewpoint implemented assumed paramount importance. At the People's Congress held in Tan Trao on 16 August 1945, I was entrusted with the task of expounding the Party's viewpoint which was that our people had to take in hand the destiny of the country, seize the opportunity to stage an insurrection to conquer power, overthrow the Tran Trong Kim puppet government, set up a provisional government and proclaim Vietnam's independence and freedom — all that before the arrival of the Allied troops. In the revolutionary paper "Liberation Banner", I wrote two articles in this spirit: "Follow the Party line!" and "Aim our blows at the main enemy".

After the Congress, we rapidly went into action. Comrade Tran Huy Lieu was charged by the Standing Committee of the Party's Central Committee with drawing up Military Order No. 1. Comrade

Vo Nguyen Giap received order from the Central Committee to attack the Japanese troops in Thai Nguyen with the main force of the Liberation Army. I attended the troops departing ceremony held in the shade of the historic Tan Trao banian. Comrade Vo Nguyen Giap addressed our fighters. After that they shouted slogans and set out

From Tan Trao we made for Thai Nguyen. Near Pho Co, we met a company of Liberation troops on their way to Son Duong. We talked to them about the situation and their task. Thus informed of the favourable opportunity and their responsibility, they were elated. Said I: "The moment has come. We must fight the Japanese. We must also fight the French — be they of the Decoux or the De Gaulle kind — if they seek to re-occupy our country. We must recover national independence and freedom before the arrival of the Allied troops."

At Pho Co I borrowed a bicycle and rode south, later meeting comrade Vo Nguyen Giap at his H.Q. set up in the Thai Nguyen post-office building. The civilian population had evacuated the town. The Japanese troops had withdrawn into their barracks and were firing from their blockhouses. Comrade Giap told me that although we were besieging them, we had neither mortars nor heavy guns, and little ammunition for our other weapons. Our machine-guns were not effective against Japanese defences. For their part, the Japanese had reserves of food and water and strove to hold on to their positions.

Then some comrades arrived from Hanoi and gave us the latest news: we had made a successful insurrection and taken control of the Capital. There was plenty of work to do and Comrade Khang — the Secretary of the Hanoi Party Committee — was asking for our help. After discussing a plan to besiege the Japanese troops, we decided to leave for Hanoi, for the struggle there now assumed a decisive character, both politically and militarily. In the Capital the Japanese had withdrawn into their barracks and were compelled to negotiate with us. "By negotiating with us, they have implicitly recognized the revolutionary power before the Allied troops arrive!" I thought.

Comrade Tran Dang Ninh, seriously ill, had to remain in Thai Nguyen. I left him in the care of some comrades, gave him some tablets of quinine, told him the good news about the successful insurrection in Hanoi on 19 August, then said farewell to him and boarded a car for Hanoi. At Dap Cau the road was under flood waters following the bursting of a dyke. The Dap Cau paper-mill had been seized by the workers who had declared it nationalized. While waiting for a boat which would take us to Hanoi, I talked to the Dap Cau Liberation Committee and the workers about the situation in the Capital and some other places, then praised the workers for their seizure of the French-owned mill, and asked them to try to ensure continued production.

We told our comrades from Hanoi that we would meet them at Phu Dong village on the dyke, then boarded a boat bound for Hanoi. After more than one hour sailing across an immense expanse of flooded fields with the wind making the sailing rather rough, we approached Phu Dong and saw two cars flying yellow-starred red flags waiting on the dyke. Said our Hanoi comrades: "The Capital is waiting for Uncle Ho and his aides to arrive from their jungle base."

In Hanoi, we drove in the direction of the Temple of Literature and stopped at the house of an electrician facing one of its sides. Comrades Nguyen Van Tran and Khuat Duy Tien let me know that they had a spacious and quiet place ready for us.

The next morning, they brought us to No. 48 Hang Ngang Street which was the house of Trinh Van Bo, a national bourgeois who was to become a Party member. Here we discussed the broadening of the Provisional Government and a safe way to bring Uncle Ho to the Capital as quickly as possible. The situation was evolving fast and the Japanese were paralyzed. It was urgent to have him in the Capital City to give leadership to the revolution against such a quickly-changing background.

Comrade Le Duc Tho was dispatched to Tan Trao to this end. But while he was travelling north via Pho Co, Uncle Ho had taken another route to Hanoi. Comrade Tho immediately retraced his steps, found Uncle Ho and took him to the house of Mrs Chanh Hai in Phu Gia village (now Phu Thuong), Tu Liem district in the suburbs of Hanoi. Informed of these developments by comrade Tho, I went to meet Uncle Ho and reported to him about the situation. Then I invited him to come and live at 48 Hang Ngang Street while another residence was to be urgently prepared for him.

On the road to the Capital we rode in the same car. It was 25 August 1945. On the front seat were the driver and a guard. So, we were four in all. He looked deeply moved, especially as we drove along Gia Lam road bedecked with a forest of yellow-starred red flags, the colours of the revolution. The car crossed Long Bien Bridge and drove into the City where ever more flags appeared. On many houses, two or even three flags fluttered, one on each floor. Our car drove through Hang Dau, Hang Giay, Hang Duong streets and stopped at Hang Ngang. Looking at Uncle Ho's face as he sat lost in thought, I could imagine his deep emotion: after nearly one century of colonial rule, the Vietnamese nation had now taken in hand its destiny. It had recovered its independence and freedom.

On the way, I had reported to him about the flood which had put many localities under water. He looked deeply concerned and asked for detailed

OBJECTIVES AND PRINCIPLES OF THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT RE-ASSERTED

On 15 September last, DINH NHO LIEM, first Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs and head of the Vietnamese delegation to the Non-aligned Ministerial Conference in Nicosia, capital of Cyprus, granted an interview to Vietnam News Agency. Below is the text of the interview:

Question: What is the main result achieved at that Ministerial Conference?

Answer: The main result is that the conference strongly reasserted the objectives and principles of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in the context of profound changes in the world situation. At the same time it called on the Non-Aligned Movement member countries to further strengthen their solidarity and develop NAM's active role in the common struggle against imperialism, colonialism and racism and for peace, national independence and development.

Question: What was the attitude of the Conference toward the Kampuchea issue, and peace and stability in Southeast Asia?

Answer: The conference welcomed the on-going dialogue aimed at seeking a political solution to the Kampuchea issue and ensuring peace and stability in Southeast Asia. The Political Declaration of the conference reflects the correct and constructive stance of the movement, now as before concerning the Kampuchea issue and peace, stability and cooperation in Southeast Asia. It hailed the Jakarta informal meeting (JIM), highly appreciated the initiative on Kampuchea of the President of the Movement, and considered the Movement's initiative and JIM two mutually-supporting and complementary processes. In his letter to the heads of the non-aligned countries to inform them of the Movement's initiative on Kampuchea the President of NAM, Robert Mugabe, stressed:

"The main objective of NAM's initiative is to create an international framework and support for the common efforts aimed at stepping up the process leading to a settlement of the Kampuchea issue, adopting the necessary confidence-building measures, and creating guarantees for the independence and sovereignty of all countries in the region".

Question: What is your comment on the allegation that the two key problems raised in the Kampuchea issue are propaganda ploys of Vietnam?

Answer: The two key problems are the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops and the preventing of the return to power of the genocidal Pol Pot clique. These points have been unanimously agreed upon by the participants in the Jakarta informal meeting on July 25-28, 1988, and expounded in the statement of the president of the meeting. On September 6, 1988, a ministerial conference of Zimbabwe, Cuba, India, Indonesia, Vietnam and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) was held in Nicosia, and adopted a report by high-ranking officials of those six participants at a meeting held in Harare on August 15-17, 1988, on the Kampuchea issue. The report highly values the agreement reached at the JIM on the two key points of a political solution to the Kampuchea issue. In his speech at the ministerial conference in Nicosia, Indonesian Foreign Minister Ali Alatas reported on the results of the Jakarta meeting, stressing that the parties to the meeting shared the view that the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops must be effected in the framework of an overall political solution preventing a return to the genocidal policy and acts of the Pol Pot regime and putting an end to all foreign intervention and supply of weapons to the opposition Kampuchean forces.

So, those two key points are not raised by Vietnam alone but are the common stand of all parties concerned at the Jakarta meeting. This view has enjoyed sympathy and support from world public opinion. ●

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information. As soon as we reached destination, Uncle Ho tackled the question of broadening the Provisional Government. He pointed out that although the decision to enlarge it was correct, it had not been sufficiently broadened, a sign of some narrow-mindedness on our part. Then he gave his views on such urgent matters as relief to the victims of famine and floods, preventing hooliganism, theft and robbery in the present difficult circumstances, maintaining security and order as well as good sanitation. After that, he brought up the subject of the drafting of the Declaration of Independence.

Recorded by THANH TIN

NEW CHAPTER IN VIETNAM – MALAYSIA RELATIONS

At the invitation of the SRV Government, Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister Abdul Ghafar Bin Baba and other high-ranking officials of Malaysia paid an official friendship visit to Vietnam from 26 to 29 August 1988.

As stated in the Vietnam — Malaysia communiqué issued on 30 August 1988, the two sides are satisfied with the results of this official visit.

The visit made by Deputy Prime Minister Abdul Ghafar Bin Baba has further strengthened the long-standing Malaysia — Vietnam relations. Malaysia is the first ASEAN country to have sent its Foreign Minister to visit Vietnam in 1980, opening a process of dialogue between the ASEAN and Indochinese countries on regional problems including the Kampuchea issue. Malaysia is also the first country to have sent a Deputy Prime Minister to visit Vietnam right after the Jakarta informal meeting (JIM) (25 to 28 July 1988). We highly appreciate the goodwill of the Malaysian Government and people.

During this visit by the Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister, Vietnam and Malaysia exchanged views on a number of issues in relations between the two countries, including that of Vietnamese « refugees ». The two sides also expressed their sympathy with each other's difficulties and agreed to work in close cooperation to devise measures to resolve this issue in a spirit of humanity and good neighbourliness. Vietnam agreed to a number of proposals made by the Malaysian side, including participation in an international conference to be initiated by Malaysia for that purpose. The two sides also discussed measures aimed at promoting long-term relations between the two countries in economy, science, technology, and trade. The communiqué states that « appreciable progress has been achieved in the relations of friendship and cooperation between the two countries ». This progress is the result of the efforts and goodwill deployed by both sides in conformity with the aspirations and interests of the two peoples, and with the situation in the region, which is evolving in a positive way, beneficial to peace and stability in Southeast Asia.

The visit to Vietnam by the Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister took place at a very important juncture: in the world and the region the situation has rapidly evolved from confrontation to dialogue; the Jakarta informal meeting achieved good results which opened up favourable prospects for an early political solution to the Kampuchea issue; working visits and meetings have taken place between leaders of countries in the region; and active preparations are being made for the following Jakarta informal meeting... Those developments are conducive to a new era in Southeast Asia — an era of peace, friendship and cooperation.

Vietnam highly appreciates Malaysia's initiatives and active contributions aimed at establishing a zone of peace, freedom and neutrality (ZOPFAN) as well as a nuclear-free zone in Southeast Asia. Vietnam affirms its willingness to cooperate with Malaysia and with all other countries in the region to realize these initiatives. Malaysia's constructive proposals aimed at promoting dialogue and finding a solution for the Kampuchea issue are welcomed by public opinion. The goodwill and constructive spirit shown by the two countries with regard to regional issues are evidenced by their agreement to work urgently for a settlement of the Kampuchea issue; their view of JIM as a positive step toward a comprehensive and long-term solution for that issue; and their agreement to actively support the efforts of the working group set up by JIM, and generally to strive for JIM's success. Those facts also prove that the differences of view between countries and outstanding problems in the region can be settled through negotiation on the basis of equality and mutual respect and understanding.

The Vietnamese people warmly hail the success of the official friendship visit to our country by the Malaysian delegation. It marks a new step forward, and raises hopes for a new stage in the relations of friendship and cooperation between the two countries. The Vietnamese people, together with the Malaysian people, will do their utmost to strengthen this relationship. ●

GREAT ACHIEVEMENTS BY THE D.P.R. OF KOREA

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea was founded on 9 September 1948. This great event was the result of the long and brave struggle of the Korean people and marked the beginning of a new era in the history of the Korean nation — the era of independence, freedom and socialism.

The past four decades have been the most vigorous period of development of the 5,000 years of Korean history. Under the correct leadership of the Workers' Party of Korea, headed by beloved President Kim Il Sung, the Korean people have gained great victories in the building and defence of their socialist homeland.

From a poor and backward country, the DPRK has developed into a socialist country with developed agriculture and industry, advanced culture and science, powerful national defence, and ever-improving living standards. Especially over the past ten years, the Korean people have recorded proud achievements in their socialist construction, which have changed the face of the country. By 1986, total industrial output had increased 474 times over 1946, including 800 million metres of fabrics, 80 million tons of coal, and 7 million tons of steel.

The great achievements of the Korean people during the past 40 years have actively contributed to strengthening socialism, and constitute a firm basis for the Korean people's struggle for peaceful national reunification.

In foreign relations, the Workers' Party of Korea and the DPRK Government have put forward several proposals approved by the entire Korean people and welcomed by world public opinion, aimed at eliminating tension on the Korean peninsula, turning this region into a zone of peace free of nuclear weapons, realizing national reconciliation and concord, and advancing toward peaceful and sovereign national reunification.

Vietnam highly values and totally supports the DPRK's constructive stand in seeking to reach the nation's sacred aim, and expresses its strong belief that with the strength deriving from the solidarity of the whole nation, the Korean people will fulfil their sacred cause of national reunification.

Since long, the Vietnamese and the Korean peoples have been bound by mutual sympathies and long-standing friendship and have always supported and helped each other. The Vietnamese people are elated at the great achievements of the Korean people in their national construction and defence.

In a message of congratulations on the occasion of the 40th founding anniversary of the DPRK, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam Nguyen Van Linh, and President of the SRV State Council Vo Chi Cong have expressed our heartfelt thanks to the Korean Workers' Party and the Korean State and people for their precious assistance to the Vietnamese revolution, and the wish that relations between the two countries will be further developed on the basis of Marxism-Leninism, and socialist internationalism in the interests of the two peoples and of peace, national independence and socialism in Asia and the world. ●

AFGHANISTAN

Let the US and Pakistan HONOUR THEIR COMMITMENTS AT GENEVA

By 15 August 1988, in implementation of the Geneva Agreement on the settlement of the Afghan problem, the first withdrawal of Soviet volunteer troops from this country was completed: fifty thousand out of over one hundred thousand Soviet soldiers had left the country. European and American observers admit that in view of the present tempo of withdrawal « there is no denying that the Soviet Union will pull out all its troops » and that « it is resolved to implement the agreement ».

In the three months since the Geneva Agreement came into force, in both words and deeds, Afghanistan and the Soviet Union have scrupulously respected their commitments. The Soviet Union has completed the first stage of the withdrawal. True to the agreement of friendship, goodneighbourliness, and cooperation with Afghanistan, the Soviet Union has given it staunch support. The Afghan people have given a warm send-off to the Soviet soldiers and have done everything required to normalize the situation in their country. While looking after production work, they have given a hearty welcome to one hundred thousand Afghan returnees and created favourable conditions for their resettlement. The People's Democratic Party, the Council of Nationalities and the Coalition Government have done their utmost to solve outstanding problems. The national

(Continued on page 18)

THE UGLY FACE OF APARTHEID

According to foreign news reports, on 26 August 1988, the South African administration had four more African patriots executed in a Pretoria prison. This was a new savage crime of that racist administration against the South African people. By having the four African patriots executed without any evidence of offence, the South African administration brutally trampled on fundamental human rights, and insolently challenged public opinion in Africa and the world.

Under the racist administration in Pretoria the South African people, especially the patriotic and progressive forces, have undergone serious trials. Since June 1986, when it declared a state of emergency, 25,000 South African patriots, among them many women and children, have been imprisoned. South Africa is the country with the highest annual number of death sentences. In 1987, 164 patriots were executed and in the first months of this year, 104 more suffered the same fate.

This medieval barbarity is coupled with a series of fascist measures: a ban on 17 anti-apartheid organizations, the « state of emergency » extended for one more year, repression of students and the press, etc. These actions are deliberately aimed at stamping out the people's struggle for democracy, freedom and abolition of the reactionary racist regime. Far from being evidence of that regime's strength they only pour oil on the fire of the people's struggle. Pretoria's policy of deliberately using force and ignoring the people's legitimate aspirations will only cause progressive mankind to feel even more indignant and determined to demand an end to its policy of terror and the release of all South African patriots still illegally detained. ●

RENOVATE ECONOMIC MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOP PRODUCTION IN NON-STATE ECONOMIC SECTORS

Editor's Note: The Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam recently adopted Resolution 16 "On the renovation of policies and managerial mechanisms in production establishments of the non-State economic sectors". Nhan Dan, central organ of the Party, on 23, 24 and 25, August, 1988, serialized an article by DO MUOI, Political Bureau member of the Party CC and Chairman of the Council of Ministers highlighting the main contents and significance of this important resolution. Below is a condensed version of the article. Subtitles are ours.

1. Production and Management in the Non-State Economic Sectors

In the past years, along with the development of the State-run economic sector, production establishments in the non-State sectors comprising industrial factories, service industries in building and transport (chiefly small industries and handicrafts) belonging to the collective, private, family-based, joint State-private, and small-entrepreneur economies, and production establishments of the national bourgeoisie have taken shape and developed in many regions of the country, especially in the major cities and towns and in the plains. Non-State productive forces play an important role in the national economy. They can produce a wide range of consumer goods, export commodities and part of the capital goods needed in many economic branches, such as chemicals, small equipment, fishing and aquatic-product processing equipment, small transport means, hand tools in agriculture... While providing services for production, life and society, they also provide jobs for millions of people in rural and urban areas alike, create conditions for the redistribution of local labour, and associate industry with other economic branches.

The small industries, handicrafts and small-scale building and transport industries employ nearly two million people. Together with the hundreds of thousands of farmers engaged in handicrafts as sidelines of agriculture, they account for 60% of the regional industry's output value and 40% of the output value of industry in the whole country. The growth rate of this sector averages more than 10% annually. In a number of localities it has reached 20% and even 30%.

What has been our attitude in the past years toward this important sector of our economy?

The resolution of the 6th plenum of the 4th Party Central Committee (1979) laid down new fundamental principles with regard to production and trading operations. This led to a quick development of productive forces in almost all parts of the country in the early eighties. In recent years, the resolutions of the 2nd, 3rd and 4th plenums of the 6th Central Committee of the Party, together with subsequent resolutions of the Political Bureau and decrees of the Council of Ministers, coupled with their dynamic and creative application in a number of localities, have brought about visible progress in these important economic sectors.

But we have also committed certain mistakes in the organisation and management of the non-State economic sector:

Over a long period of time we have failed to see the importance of the position and role of the non-State productive forces and accordingly have not directed their operations along the line of the State plan. We have not combined small-scale with large-scale production, and have not rearranged production by economic and technical branch and by region. Although small industries are practised on a small scale, in the present conditions of modern technologies, they can nonetheless reach a high technical level and achieve high productivity and quality at low cost. In effect, in many branches where major establishments assume the key tasks, the other links in the chain of production may be assigned to small industries and even cottage industries, whose equipment can be quite modern, e.g. in such fields as textiles, clothes making, household utensils, machine components, spare parts, etc. Here adequate combination must be effected between large, medium, and small-scale production.

However, an irrational structure still prevails in our small industries. While not giving the necessary incentives to some branches and occupations which deserve them, we are giving a free rein to others which should have been restricted. We have not developed those branches and occupations which chiefly use raw materials available in the country, while production establishments have multiplied in branches requiring imported materials. With regard to the products, there is, generally speaking, a lack of coordination: some products are in short supply, others are in excess, and many are not up to standard, resulting in waste. In some areas, instead of organizing production right in the countryside where we can use local materials and surplus farm labour, as in the making of jute carpets and rush mats we have set up production units in the towns. Meanwhile, industries using imported materials such as those making woollen carpets, embroideries, lace, etc., which should be established in the towns, are practised in the countryside.

Another shortcoming of our small industries and handicrafts lies in the fact that we have failed to monitor the world market, and have invested too little in technical and artistic designing aimed at making timely changes in the patterns, models and colours of our products, especially in handicrafts. This has led to a mass production of monotonous items which are little appreciated on the world market.

There was a time, during the drive for the collectivisation of production, when we were inclined, when seeking to establish the new relations of production, to pay more attention to form than content, and to disregard the need to consolidate and develop the productive forces.

Hastiness in setting up a uniform system of ownership while paying little consideration to concrete measures and steps and to transitional socio-economic forms, has led to a reduction of the productive forces and the decline of many traditional crafts. In not a few places we have applied in a mechanistic way the planning methods of State-run enterprises to cooperatives and have even imposed certain modes of distribution of revenues and election of managerial boards. Meanwhile, there has been virtually no control over the small entrepreneurs and private enterprises. We have done little to supply materials to them. The inefficient State-owned trade service has also contributed to the confusion. Cooperation and association between State-owned enterprises and those in the collective, self-employed and private sectors have not been governed by law. There remain many shortcomings and loopholes in our economic and social policies, particularly a confused view has been taken of these two kinds of policies. Supervision and control by State organs has been both loose and vexatious. Illicit operations and acts of fraud, tax evasion and counterfeit in the private and self-employed sectors have not been checked. In many localities, taking advantage of loose guidance and control by the authorities, many self-employed people and private enterprises have passed themselves off as cooperatives or collectives in order to engage in illicit businesses, thus hurting the economy in general, reducing budget revenues and corrupting not a few cadres.

Within the collective enterprises, managerial work tends to be more formal than substantial, giving little genuine attention to the legitimate rights and interests of the working people.

Over a long period of time, the State has exercised only loose control over the non-State economic sectors. Almost all collective enterprises (except for a few branches such as clothes making and textiles) were left out of the branch management by ministries, hence out of the State plan in terms of productive forces, labour, materials and technical means. Accordingly, the ministries did not take responsibility for control and planning with regard to the non-State enterprises, and neglected the training of managerial staff and skilled workers for them. For their part, local administrations, especially in the districts, city wards and communes, have not had their tasks and powers clearly defined. As a result, they have not only failed to fulfil their managerial functions as State bodies but have also unduly interfered in the internal activities of grassroots units and seriously violated their right to self-management. Likewise, the Unions of Cooperatives at different levels, which should provide them with leadership and managerial assistance, have not had their powers clearly defined and so have failed to grasp their needs. There has been duplication and overlapping in the exercise of managerial and administrative functions, which has resulted in little stimulus being given to productive activities.

To sum up, during the recent past the non-State production establishments have taken shape and

developed, and have achieved some success. However, their achievements are far below their real capacities and potentials.

II. Renovation of Managerial Policies and Mechanisms

After pointing to the great economic benefits that could be reaped if the potentials of the non-State sectors were properly exploited, the Chairman of the Council of Ministers proposes the following fundamental policies:

1. Along with strengthening and developing the State-owned and collective economies, making the State-owned economy the true leading sector while constantly consolidating the collective sector, we should give unlimited scope to the development of family-based, joint State-private, self-employed and private capitalist enterprises in both the urban and rural areas. We should devise new mechanisms, do away with prejudices and discrimination against non-State economic sectors, and abandon the tendency to deprive them of equality with State-run units before the law, and to enforce monopoly by the latter. Through legislation and concrete economic policies, especially equitable taxation and planning, the State should exercise a positive effect on the formation and development of branches and services catering for the immediate and long-term needs of society. This is a way to step up both specialisation and cooperation, promote the application of new technologies, stimulate investment, renovation of equipment and application of modern manufacturing methods in accordance with the guideline: "modern small industries and high-standard crafts".

We should develop in priority those branches which would create jobs and use chiefly raw materials available in the country, and attach especial importance to developing those occupations and branches closely related to agriculture and consuming little energy and raw materials. Investments should be made in such branches as would bring in quick profits and high incomes for the workers, and revenues to the national budget.

The building and strengthening of the new production relations must aim at developing productive forces. We should re-adjust and stabilize the various components of the economy in order to create an economic and social environment and a legal framework ensuring equality for the operations of the non-State sectors.

2. Following are the contents of major State policies regarding each economic sector and each form of economic organisation.

a) *Collective economy*: The collective economy comprises organisations assuming one of the following two forms: collective and cooperative. They are forms of the socialist economy. The advance of an organization to a higher form must be based on the need to develop production, the level of the socialisation of production, and the free consent of its members.

The collective economy is based on the principle of free consent, democracy and common benefit.

It consists of voluntary organisations of working people who pool their capital and labour for production, trading or services compatible with their capacities and the needs of society. These organizations may hire skilled labour for work involving sophisticated technologies or high standards of craftsmanship. When the need arises, these enterprises may seek to attract more capital and enter into joint ventures with other enterprises inside or outside the country in order to develop production. The enterprises of the collective economy operate on the principle of self-management. Their members will decide on the orientation of production, the distribution of income, the size of fund accumulation, the form of management, and the scope of the enterprise.

b) *Family-based economy*. It consists of the side-line occupations undertaken by State employees and workers in State-owned factories, collective enterprises and private enterprises as well as persons past working age and their families. They work on materials farmed out by enterprises producing for the domestic and overseas markets, and provide services necessary to society.

The family-based economy is encouraged to develop and is exempted from production and trading taxes.

c) *Joint State-private enterprise*. They are economic units set up by one or many households having property and money, who cooperate with the State as shareholders in joint production or business activities and share in the profits in proportion to the capital they have contributed.

This form of economy is encouraged to develop and the people contributing to the assets enjoy State protection with regard to the property and funds they have contributed and their legitimate incomes from the joint enterprise.

d) *Private economy*: It consists of enterprises set up by private citizens with property and capital, who engage in production and business in accordance with the law. The private economy comprises the following forms:

A private household enterprise is one set up by a private citizen who registers with the authorities and organises production together with his family. He may hire seasonal labour.

A self-employed household is an enterprise in which the head of the household is the main producer. He may hire additional labour if necessary.

e) *Industrial capitalist enterprises* (private enterprise for short) are set up by one or more national capitalists who pool capital to undertake production or business in the form of a private enterprise or company, a joint-stock company or a collective of private enterprises without any limit set for their scope. These enterprises may hire workers as required by the production and technology. They enjoy protection by State laws.

3. The non-State production establishments enjoy full autonomy in deciding whether or not to engage in joint production, joint venture or union with other economic units. The Government authorizes the establishment of unions of enterprises comprising economic units in one or many branches belonging to different economic sectors, of centres providing services for production.

service companies, supply and marketing centres common to a number of enterprises.

In a word, there shall be expansion and diversification in the formation of unions of enterprises, joint enterprises and associated enterprises, for the development of production and trading, on the basis of free consent and mutual benefit.

4. The State shall adopt concrete policies and measures to ensure equality before the law for all production units belonging to all economic sectors; protect the legitimate interests of the collective and family-based economy; protect the rights and responsibilities of all parties in lawful business activities and the right to ownership and inheritance of individual producers, self-employed people, and national capitalists; and protect the legitimate interests of those employed by private enterprises.

5. Policies on macro-economic management by the State over non-State production establishments shall also be renovated in the new situation.

With regard to planning, the non-State production establishments shall build their own plans. They shall define their own targets, orientation, and plans for production and trading according to the needs of society and their own capacities in materials, technique, capital and labour. No State organ may assign mandatory targets to these production units.

Non-State economic units shall establish relations with State-owned units and other economic organisations through economic contracts signed in the spirit of cooperation on an equal footing, mutual benefit, and "socialist competition" and by relying on their own capacities and talents.

With regard to materials and technical equipment, the State shall reserve an adequate quantity for sale to non-State units through the national supply system and shall adopt policies favouring the development of areas devoted to the cultivation and exploitation of raw materials for this sector. In addition, the non-State units shall seek to supply themselves in raw and other materials in accordance with the regulations on the exploitation and protection of natural resources. They must be regarded as an important customer of State-owned engineering factories and other economic and technical bases entrusted with the supply of equipment to production bases.

With respect to marketing, the non-State units shall market their own products according to economic contracts and are allowed to set up shops to sell, guarantee and repair their products. Those units producing export goods are entitled to use their foreign-currency earnings to purchase machinery and materials for expanded production, and to choose companies to represent them in import and export operations.

Large cooperatives and joint state-private enterprises which meet the criteria set by the state are allowed to establish direct import and export links with foreign economic organisations.

With regard to science and technology, the State shall assist and encourage non-State establishments to apply advanced science and technologies to their production operations. Those which achieve high economic efficiency will enjoy tax reduction and be given preference in contracting bank loans and in the supply of materials. They may patent their innovations and inventions and will receive due commendation and remuneration for them.

In the field of labour, those establishments which hire workers must strictly observe regulations on the hiring of labour such as ensuring welfare benefits for the workers, protecting their health, and ensuring labour safety. The State shall promulgate a regime of social insurance and pension for workers employed in these sectors.

With regard to taxes, the State shall adopt a fair and reasonable policy with a view to encouraging production, especially that of export goods.

In the field of finance, accountancy, and credit, the non-State production units must observe regulations on registration, and follow a unified system of accountancy and statistics. They may choose the banks where they wish to open accounts, on the basis of equal rights for both sides.

To fulfil the above points and further promote commodity production, we must renovate the State management apparatus and social organisations.

What is most important and urgent now is for cadres in all branches of activity and at all levels of authority to renovate their thinking thoroughly and to make careful studies in order to concretize and institutionalize this resolution and turn it into well-coordinated State legislation. We must urgently promulgate model statutes for cooperatives and joint State-private enterprises; rules for the activity of unions of production enterprises and service centres; rules for the organisation of the Central Council of Cooperatives and non-State production units, work out incentive policies for small entrepreneurs and national capitalists so that they may bring funds to State-owned enterprises for greater utilisation of their capacity with a view to higher productivity and quality of products. We need to amend and modify our tax policy in order to encourage the development of production and trading in the right direction and to promulgate a regime and procedure for the registration of private enterprises, etc.

In the immediate future, we have to do the following: To strengthen and develop the existing cooperatives in order to promote their role as the core of the non-State economy; reorganize those production and business enterprises which have passed themselves off as cooperatives and restore them to their real status and mode of production.

The leadership at all levels, from the centre to the grassroots, must guide and control the implementation of the policies promulgated and complement them with the necessary provisions in accordance with the spirit of this resolution. ●

THE FIRST PRIVATE ENTERPRISE IN HANOI

On 28 April 1988 the first private enterprise was set up in Hanoi. The birth of the Toan Thang engineering enterprise was indeed a sign of economic renewal in the city. Its business is to make 10-12 h.p. diesel engines and repair cars, motocycles and small tractors.

Below is the translation of an interview with its manager Truong Huu Thang by Minh Tuan of the weekly *Dai Doan Ket* (Great Solidarity).

* * *

Minh Tuan : At your present location, No. 27 Tong Duy Tan street, all I've seen is a small workshop, several fairly modern machine-tools, and no more than 10 workers. Can this be a full-fledged enterprise ?

Truong Huu Thang : It has been our long-cherished hope to set up a big enterprise making modern industrial products. However, it was not until 9 March 1988 that Decree No. 27 of the Council of Ministers [1] was issued, and only late in April was our enterprise allowed to operate. If there is no major change in our plan, in three years'time we shall have a fairly big enterprise with part of the production process being carried out at some of our members' homes.

M. T.: At present 10-12 h.p. diesel engines are being turned out by the Tran Hung Dao Engineering Factory in Hanoi and two other State-run factories in the South. These enterprises have thousands of workers each, as well as modern machines and workshops. Can you compete with them ?

T.H.T : The Tran Hung Dao Engineering Factory has more than 2,000 workers and engineers, including highly qualified ones as well as fairly modern equipment and machines. It also enjoys certain privileges accorded by the State as regards taxes, material supplies and the like. But it is tied up by cumbersome bureaucratic managerial mechanisms. It does not make more than 6,000 tractor engines a year. Besides, those are only of mediocre quality, showing no noticeable improvement over a period of several years.

M.T.: Will you be a bit more explicit ?

T.H.T: I'll give you an illustration : the director of the Tran Hung Dao Engineering Factory cannot pay his workers wages of up to 50,000 dong a month. With the wages we pay them, our workers will be able to work for all they are worth ; they will perform much better than when they were with State enterprises.

M.T : Does this mean that the autonomy of private enterprises gives them greater dynamism ?

T.H.T : That's correct. True, we don't enjoy a favoured status as regards taxes, material supplies, initial loans... But on the other hand, we are not burdened with a bureaucratic organization, do not have to wait for directives from above, do not pay the same wages to good and bad, industrious and lazy, workers. With permission from the State we are ready to bid for the Tran Hung Dao Engineering Factory ; under our management, its output may increase severalfold.

M.T : I've learnt that in 1982 your engineering shop designed a production line for plastic insecticide power sprayers which got a gold medal at the Giang Vo fair. But when you received an order for 100,000 sprayers from the Ministry of Agriculture you chose to sell the licence for making them. Why ?

T.H.T : That's true. To make sprayers according to our design, we asked for permission to pay one worker upward of 1,000 dong (1982 *dong*) a month depending on their skills, but we were allowed by the Wage and Price Commission to pay them only 300 *dong*. Unwilling to resort to subterfuges to evade that ceiling, we preferred to sell our blueprints and equipment. Thank you for having mentioned that highly illustrative case. In fact, it is due to those bureaucratic strings that so far in Hanoi only two private enterprises have been set up. People are acting cautiously being in the dark about future State policies.

M.T : Now that you have been formally authorized to set up a private enterprise I suppose that the authorities in various branches and at various levels have begun to behave differently ?

T.H.T : Yes, but changes have happened very slowly. Decree No. 27 authorizes people to set up private enterprises. The Hanoi administration has given us active help. Only 50 days after we applied, it gave us the authorization. However, it is only a birth certificate that we've got so far. In order to function effectively, we need to have the backing

of appropriate policies on financing, banking, supply of materials, marketing, labour, etc.

M.T: How do you solve the various problems of production, finance, materials, marketing, etc.?

T.H.T: We raised capital by selling shares to our friends at home and abroad. We have enough equipment for the time being and we can make more ourselves. At present, we are making full use of waste and scrap. What worries us is how to get some special materials and components which cannot as yet be made in the country for lack of the proper technologies. Marketing doesn't worry us: the outle for agricultural machines in our country is a large one. Regarding skilled manpower, we have highly-qualified workers and are recruiting more.

M.T: Please tell us what prompted you to tackle your difficult endeavour?

T.H.T: Whenever I went to the countryside I was moved by the sight of people toiling and moiling. Everything is done by hand with the help of only draught animals: ploughing, hoeing, spading, spraying insecticide. I think we can help in the mechanization of farmwork. This year, we shall test-produce 10 motors after a South Korean design. In the years to come, we plan to manufacture thousands more.

M.T: Of course, you expect to run into competition as a private undertaking?

T.H.T: Not only in our field of production but in the economic field in general there must be competition. This means that the producers will have to turn out goods that are of good quality, cheap, and well presented. We ask that the State give equitable treatment to all producers and create conditions for competition to take place between all kinds of enterprises. In the last analysis, the superiority of socialism lies in higher productivity, product quality and economic efficiency, not in whether or not the products bear State or collective trade- marks. Lastly, we hope that the State will help us contact a number of foreign firms including some from capitalist countries.

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1. See *Vietnam Courier* No. 6, 1988. In this decree, the household and private economy is formally recognized by the State as a component of our economy, whose development is to be encouraged.

NEW ORIENTATION IN THE MECHANIZATION OF AGRICULTURE

In Vietnam, a number of traditional farm implements have been used since the beginnings of wet rice cultivation. They are suited to the characteristics and requirements of various regions but are not very efficient. That is why in the process of industrialization and building of socialist agriculture, we must quickly improve our farming tools and technique. Besides the selection of seeds, the use of fertilizers and water control, we must have more energy, draught force, and better agricultural implements.

In the last three decades, we have obtained substantial results in the improvement of our farm implements.

In the North, in the period from 1955 to 1965, a broad movement for the improvement of traditional farm tools took place, and agricultural mechanization began in State farms and cooperatives. In the fields, improved hand tools and particularly tractors made their appearance.

In this period, due to its modest scope, mechanization involved only 1% of the planted area. In the war of resistance against American aggression (1965 — 1975) when many of the country's youth left for the front, agricultural mechanization made a step further. Electric and internal-combustion motors were used in soil preparation, irrigation, and paddy threshing. By 1975, the North was equipped with 7,000 tractors, 20,000 internal-combustion engines and over 40,000 other power-driven machines. Mechanization involved 10% of the planted area. In that period we began manufacturing power-driven pumps, cultivators and threshing machines.

Meanwhile a noteworthy technical achievement was recorded: the improvement of tractors to work in flooded fields. Tractors are now used in two crops each year instead of just one, and mechanization began in earnest in the cultivation of wet rice. In the South, from 1955 to 1975, individual farmers learnt to make use of tractors and other agricultural

machines. By 1975 there were in that part of the country about 20,000 tractors, big and small, and over 100,000 small engines for the propulsion of boats and operation of pumps.

After national reunification in 1976, in order to boost agricultural production and increase the tempo of mechanization, in the 5 years from 1976 to 1980, our agriculture was equipped with an additional 13,000 tractors, 10,000 small ones (two-wheeled), and various agricultural machines, and 1,700 small electric pumping stations were built. By 1980, 35-40% of the ricefields were irrigated by mechanized means and by 1988 25% were tilled by such means.

In the past 30 years, the use of hundreds of thousands more machines and tractors has contributed to the increase in farm production through the enlargement of the planted area, multiplication of crops, intensive culture, increased productivity, fight against natural calamities, etc. But the results obtained so far have not corresponded to the importance of our investment. One of the reasons is the failure to understand the importance of technology and the characteristics of agricultural mechanization, and the attendant wasteful use of machines. For instance, from 1976 to 1980, agricultural mechanization was stepped up, with a massive input of tractors and combines for harvesting rice and maize. But this was done hastily, without proper preparations. Machines were not tested beforehand, maintenance and repair services were not available, and the fields were not properly arranged for mechanized cultivation. Likewise many experiments were conducted in Nam Ninh district (Ha Nam Ninh province) and Quynh Luu district (Nghe Tinh province) with a view to mechanization, but attention was focused exclusively on the purchase of machines, while neglecting managerial and other technical factors. And even the machines were not supplied in a well-coordinated way. No wonder the experiments failed.

Another cause is that an optimum size for cooperative farms was not yet defined and a proper mode of management not yet devised. This affected the selection of equipment and machines, and the orientation of investment.

In the period up to 1990 and after, we must implement the resolution of the 6th Party Congress and that of the Political Bureau on the renovation of agricultural management. Coupled with policies aimed at releasing all forces of production, it is necessary to strengthen the material and technical bases of agriculture.

The recipients of technical equipment are to be the State economic sector, the collective sector, the peasant families and the individual farmers, particularly the 8 million families of co-op-members, farm hands, and individual farmers. The State farms and agricultural cooperatives are to take care of the bigger farm machines and electric motors; the peasant families, of hand tools and small machines; they will require larger and larger amounts of such equipment.

The supply of agricultural machines is bound up with the technical possibilities of our agriculture and industry. At present, agricultural production in our country must combine the use of hand tools with that of machines in proportions depending on concrete conditions prevailing in each region and each period and the kind of peasant families using them. The peasant families will use mostly hand tools (a combination of traditional, improved and modern ones). Cooperatives and families with economic means above average can be supplied with some small machines for soil preparation, irrigation, harvesting and processing of products. Thus, in this sector, hand tools are to be the main means of production, supported by machines. On the other hand, in State farms, particularly those which also process their products, machines are to constitute the main force while hand tools are to play an auxiliary role.

The scope of mechanization can vary and machines can be used in a dispersed or concentrated way but for the time being, the emphasis will be on small machines used in scattered fashion.

Machines will be used mainly for intensive culture, crop protection (against flood and drought), harvesting and processing of products. They will be supplied in priority to regions producing marketable commodities and foods, particularly the Mekong delta and the Central Highlands.

The renovation of agricultural management calls for the re-organization of technical services accompanying mechanization. The management of such activities as scientific research, introduction of various technologies into agriculture, technical training for millions of farmers, manufacture and repair of farm implements and agricultural machines, must be shifted from the bureaucratic subsidy-based system to economic accounting. One must turn to account all sectors of our economy (State, collective, individual) and aim for economic efficiency.

NGUYEN DIEN

COMPETITIVE SELECTION OF HEADS OF ENTERPRISES

The development of an enterprise depends greatly, if not decisively, upon the qualities shown by its managers, first of all its director. Before 1987 an enterprise director was appointed by the province or ministry concerned. Regrettably, in some cases they were not well-informed about the situation in the enterprise or the appointee's capacities. Promotion was therefore based on the appointee's political background rather than on his moral qualities and managerial abilities. Paradoxical situations developed, e.g. when one tried to make Party members heads of enterprises instead of the other way round. Those nominations, often imposed from above, led to bad performance by the chosen candidates and poor economic results.

Since 1987, following the trend toward renewal in the whole country, especially as regards economic management there has been a change in the mode of appointment of several heads of enterprises. They were nominated by their collectives, not by the superior echelon. In our August 1987 issue, we devoted two articles to those experiments.

The procedure of nomination has been further improved upon, with the competitive selection of heads of enterprises, in two stages. First, by voting. The personnel propose a list of candidates, who then undergo a professional competition. The winner is thus believed to be the best, both morally and professionally.

In mid-1988 this form of selection was applied for the first time at the Nui Hong colliery run by the Third Coal-Mining Company under the Ministry of Energy.

The colliery is located in Dai Tu district, Bac Thai province. In recent years it has benefited from Soviet help in design and equipment. Its initial yearly output of 100,000 tonnes is to be brought up to 500,000 tonnes by 1990. In 1987, it produced 130,610 tonnes of washed coal. Indeed, it has fulfilled and overfulfilled its planned targets year after year. Production, however, has been impeded by a defective transport and marketing system.

Thus there has arisen a need for an able new manager to replace the present one who, besides, had fallen ill. This was done in this way:

First, by secret ballot. A meeting of representatives of the personnel chose five candidates: three deputy managers of the colliery and the head and deputy-head of the technical department.

Second, a jury appointed by the Ministry of Energy and comprising 10 members headed by First Vice-Minister Tran Anh Vinh, gave the competitors the subject of the examination. After 10 days of preparation, each of them expounded what he would do if appointed head of the colliery. They also answered questions put to them by the jury. After getting the audience's views, the jury gave marks to each competitor.

Former deputy manager To Quang Huy, an economic engineer, came out first with the highest marks: 78.5.

That competitive examination at the Nui Hong colliery was in accordance with the principle of democratic centralism. It also revealed the true situation at the mine and the capacities of its key cadres. There was exposed a certain weakness on their part in economic management. Hence the need for a plan to foster better managerial cadres and use them in a rational way. From the competition valuable experience can be drawn by all cadres, old and young alike. After this examination another one was held by the Coal Mining Company No.3 to choose a technical deputy-manager for the Bac Thai Mining Engineering Enterprise.

Although the organization of the competition at the Nui Hong colliery showed some deficiencies, e.g. concerning the time given to the candidates for preparing their answers, and to the jury for discussing them... in many respects it proved to be the best way to select managers in the present situation. The Ministry of Energy has resolved that from now on all enterprises under its jurisdiction shall have their managers selected following this procedure. Besides, after two years of work, any manager who has not fulfilled his task shall be dismissed and replaced by a new one to be selected in the same way.

HOA SON

AN ENTERPRISE STAFFED BY ONLY EIGHT PERSONS

A potash alum enterprise in Yen Bai town in the northern highland province of Hoang Lien Son started operating early this year on the site of an old factory.

Only eight people are on the regular payroll. Only a short time after its inauguration, it marketed its first tons of alum which was of a quality comparable to that of the product supplied by the State central supply service, but was priced 60% lower. The enterprise hopes to retrieve its initial funding sometime this year and also to make a profit.

What is the secret of its success?

First of all, the application of the contract system in hiring labour. The eight-member regular staff only looks after managerial and technical matters. The rest of the work is done under contract by people who receive their pay according to the amount and quality of their work.

Secondly and perhaps most importantly, the full employment of members of the families of the contractual workers. The enterprise only does what cannot be done by that family work force. Thus, assembly and packing, and especially the quarrying of raw materials, are done by the families.

The main raw material for the production of potash alum is kaolin. Yen Bai town lies on huge kaolin deposits. The larger seams are reserved for the ceramic industry while the smaller ones, which lie scattered about and do not lend themselves to industrial modes of exploitation are tapped by the locals, who sell the kaolin to the enterprise for the production of potash alum. Working only in off hours, each day each family can sell to the enterprise 40 slabs of potash alum for 1,000 *dong*. If the enterprise could enlarge its production further, it would involve a labour force equivalent to 500 full-time workers and would constitute a considerable source of employment for the local population.

The enterprise is trying to produce more than 100 tons of alum this year and plans to increase its output to about 1,000 tons in the coming years in face of the growing demand for alum from such industries as paper making, water supply and enrichment of apatite ore. If this can be done, the enterprise will be able to increase the value of its products from the present dozens of million to hundreds of million *dong*.

Small-sized enterprises using family labour and requiring little investment is a promising model for economic development in Vietnam

ANH BINH

LET THE US...

(Continued from page 9)

reconciliation policy has rallied all Afghan tribes and persuaded thousands of opposition elements to embark on the right path. It is an important factor for stabilizing the situation. Public opinion in the world has highly appreciated the goodwill of Afghanistan and the Soviet Union as shown in their serious implementation of the Geneva Agreement and their active contribution to the solution of the Afghan problem, for the sake of peace, stability, security and cooperation in Southwest Asia and the Asia-Pacific region.

On the other hand, the way Pakistan claims to implement the Geneva Agreement has not reassured people in the world. People of goodwill who are interested in a settlement of the Afghan problem cannot approve of the attitude and actions of Pakistan, which has signed the agreement but has been brazenly sabotaging it. The Islamabad authorities still use the « refugee camps » as training bases for Afghan counter-revolutionaries and provide sanctuaries to the reactionary seven-party « coalition government » which seeks to group the rebels under it. They also seek to infiltrate men and war materials into Afghanistan to help the counter-revolutionaries oppose the legal Afghan Government. Not only have the Pakistani authorities thus betrayed their commitments not to interfere in the domestic affairs of Afghanistan, they have also concocted absurd stories in an attempt to slander the Soviet Union, claiming that it « has stopped withdrawing its troops » and « has introduced more troops into Afghanistan ». Islamabad's design is to keep the « undeclared war » going on in Afghanistan and to keep confrontation alive in this country. The Soviet Union has time and again warned Pakistan to put an end to its dangerous policy and has reminded the US Government of its own commitment not to intervene in the affairs of Afghanistan and not to egg on Pakistan to sabotage the agreement.

Pakistan's acts of sabotage are seriously jeopardizing the agreement. Islamabad and its supporters are showing their intention to use the Geneva Agreement as a screen for their attempts to interfere in the affairs of Afghanistan and to impose their will on its people. The world's peoples condemn this scheme and demand that the agreement be correctly implemented so that the conflict may be stopped and the Afghans be left to decide their own destiny.

The Vietnamese people welcome the policy of Afghanistan and the Soviet Union, which have executed the Geneva Agreement to the letter, and demand that the US and Pakistan give proof of their goodwill and sense of responsibility by fulfilling their own commitments.

VAN HOA

TAMING A REPUTEDLY UNCONTROLLABLE RIVER

VU CAN

- **A large hydropower plant of 1.92 million Kw capacity**
- **Eradicating the danger of floods in the northern plains**
- **The first turbine generator put into operation by the end of 1988**
- **The whole project to be completed in the early years of the nineties**

Together with the northern uplands, the Red River delta, the second rice granary of Vietnam after the Mekong river delta, is the cradle of the Vietnamese nation, a people with an age-old wet-rice civilization. Here for thousands of years, the peasants tended every inch of land, struggled against nature, and eventually developed more than 1.5 million hectares of riceland capable of supporting a population density of 800 people per square kilometre — one of the highest in the world. As a result of small-scale farming, the immense expanse of fields was cut up into countless small plots of uneven levels — a characteristic feature of the North Vietnam countryside in feudal and colonial times. Following the movement for agricultural cooperativization in 1958 — 1960, the fields have been levelled and at present they look like a chessboard crisscrossed by a system of canals for irrigation and drainage and protected by screens of trees against strong winds. Thanks to water conservancy and new farming technique the formerly one-crop fields now give two crops of rice each year, and in many places a third crop in winter as well: potato, sweat potato, vegetables, melon, water melon. Thai Binh, Hai Hung and Ha Nam Ninh, once poverty-stricken provinces, have been transformed into key rice-growing areas where many agricultural cooperatives harvest as much as 10 tonnes of paddy per hectare per year while the national average is around 3 tonnes. This is considerable progress compared with the pre-revolutionary yield of barely 1.5 tonnes. People now have enough food and clothing, send their children to school, and enjoy adequate health care. In the countryside there have sprung up brick houses with tiled or concrete terrace roofs in place of the former ramshackle thatch huts...

However, although a new life has begun in the villages of the Red River delta, the sequels of the successive wars of aggression by the French colonialists and American imperialists have not yet been completely overcome. Besides, untamed nature still has in store for man many a calamity.

A Calamity from Time Immemorial

In July 1986, the rivers swelled to a critical level, as they had done in 1971, when heavy floodings had occurred. The dykes burst in many places and many downstream areas were submerged. Fortunately, the delta was not wholly affected and there were no storms, which often strike between June and October.

From time immemorial, flood combined with torrential rains and typhoons have often ravaged the Red River delta. To combat floods the peasants, generation after generation, built a colossal system of river dikes in addition to sea dikes, an undertaking on a scale that has been likened by a Western historian to the building of the Chinese Great Wall. In feudal times a system of watch stations was set up along the dikes. But in the struggle against nature, man was not always the winner. Dikes would burst every five or six years on the average. Between the early 10th and the late 19th century, no fewer than 188 floods were recorded. Between 1900 and 1945 alone, there were 18. Right after the August 1945 Revolution the newly born revolutionary power had to cope with heavy floodings caused by dyke bursts in 79 places in the Bac Bo plains.

Of course, when disaster strikes, a revolutionary power never leaves the people to fend for themselves, as feudal and colonial administrations were wont to do. In 1945, in the flood-stricken areas, the State led the people to organize mutual aid besides providing relief of its own. In the 1971 floods, helicopters of the People's Air Force brought food, medicines and roofing materials to the people in the disaster areas. Medical and sanitary services were stepped up and epidemics were nipped in the bud.

After the water had receded the unaffected provinces upstream helped in the rehabilitation of devastated areas by sending such building materials as bamboo, palm leaves (for roofing), etc. However, it is not enough to combat flood ravages.

More importantly, one must seek to prevent the floods themselves.

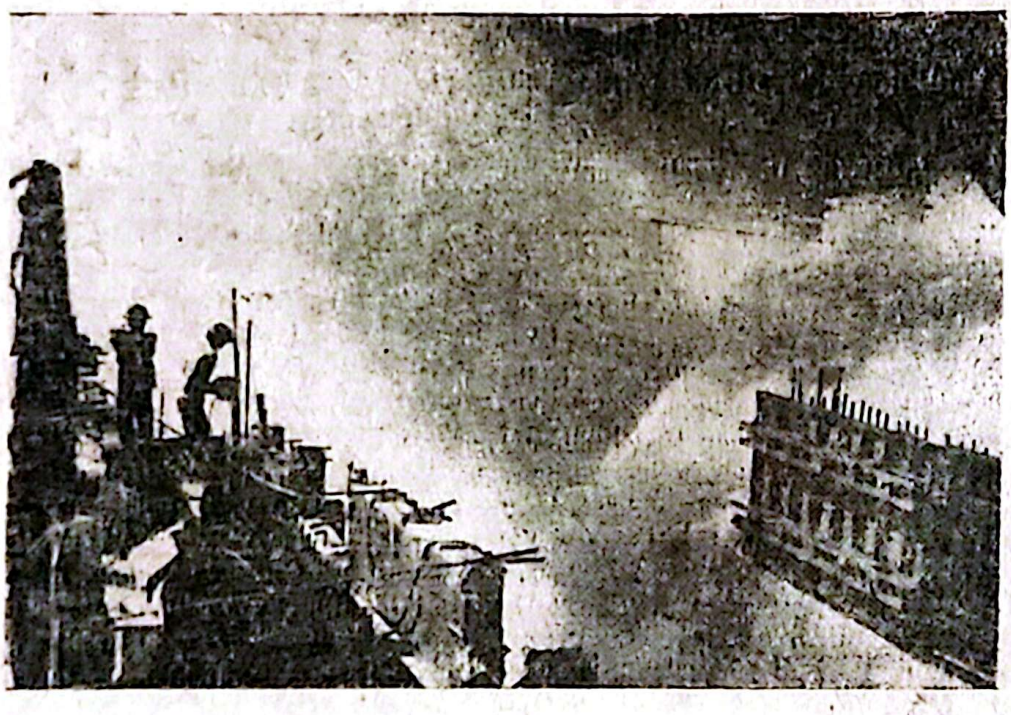
In Search of a Fundamental Solution

Less than a year after Vietnam declared its independence in September 1945, on 22 May 1946, President Ho Chi Minh signed a decree establishing in the North of the country a Central Dike Protection Commission. Since then, the fight against floods and typhoons was to follow a comprehensive plan.

The system of dikes, albeit colossal, showed the limited capacities of traditional Vietnamese society. It could not totally eradicate the danger of floods. To this end we would have to conduct geological, meteorological, and hydrological surveys, and build water reservoirs, dams, hydropower plants... We must have enough steel, cement, power generating equipment, power transmission lines, construction machines and skilled operators. The Vietnamese people are proud of their "four-thousand-year-old culture" but their traditional educational system, modelled after the Chinese traditional system, only taught classical letters, medicine, geomancy and astrology, not science and technique. During one century of "civilizing endeavour" by French colonialism there were trained for the country no more than 10 "native" engineers of "public works" as aides to French civil engineers. As for the required materials and equipment, they could not be had in an underdeveloped country which was, moreover, heavily devastated by imperialist wars of aggression.

The Soviet Union is the first country to have helped Vietnam tame the turbulent waters of the Red River system, by supplying technique, materials, and assistance in surveying, designing and construction work. Late in the fifties and early in the sixties, the Thac Ba dam was built in Yen Binh district, Hoang Lien Son province, on the Chay river near its confluence with the Lo river, one of the main tributaries of the Red River. A hydropower plant of 112,000 kw capacity saw the light of day.

A no less important fact was that along with the building of Thac Ba, a body of Vietnamese technical personnel was trained: engineers, technicians and skilled workers. This is a precious capital which was to help Vietnam design and construct major projects of its own.



Building the flood-control wall.

Photo: HA MUI

A Hard Nut to Crack

The Chay river on which Thac Ba was built, is but an affluent of a tributary of the Red River and consequently of little influence over the flow of the whole system. To tame the Red River, one must control the flow of the Da river — such was the conclusion drawn after a long survey of the system. The Da river, also called the Black River by the French, is a tributary of the Red River, with which it unites at a place 60 km north of Hanoi. Rising in Yunnan, China, it is 900 km long, has 200 affluents and is obstructed by countless rapids. Crossing 400 km of Vietnamese territory it winds its way among the rugged Northwest hills. For centuries, members of the Thai minority, living in Lai Chau and Son La provinces plied along this river in the dry season to trade with Viet farmers in the plains, using canoes made of hollowed-out large logs. However, even riding those sturdy dugouts they never ventured on the river in the flood season which begins in May, June and ends in September, October. In this period the flow of the Da river accounts for half that of the whole Red River system, jumping from 24,000 to 40,000 cubic metres per second. Near the town of Hoa Binh in Ha Son Binh province where the waters have grown much less turbulent, one may often see violent waves rising and rushing against the cliffs on the banks, smashing timber-rafts made of big logs tied together with thick rattan vines and flinging the disjointed logs about like so many straws.

Within the space of 70 years the Da river caused nearly 50 floods. In the early sixties, while the Thac Ba hydropower plant was being constructed, Soviet experts were invited here to help in the survey and design of a major project aimed at taming the Da River. In their view, the Da River was not untamable, though a hard nut to crack. The river is hemmed in between high rocky cliffs, and the gradient is very steep. The Da's flow roughly equals that of the Ienisei in western Siberia, which is many times broader and four times longer (3,600 km). Many technical difficulties were likely to crop up in the course of construction because little practical experience had so far been gathered in the building of large projects on similar rivers.

An Epochal Undertaking

The data collected during the years of joint survey by Soviet and Vietnamese experts were sent to the Soviet Institute for the Designing of Water-Control Projects for the selection of an optimum design. In the meantime, preparations were carried out: enlarging the unloading capacity of Haiphong port, broadening and upgrading Highway 6 linking Hanoi to Hoa Binh (72 km), erecting a town for the builders. The Thang Long bridge and the Bim Son cement plant — both built with Soviet help — were to provide support although they were not part of the Da river project.

The design of the Hoa Binh project was carefully reviewed by representatives of the Vietnamese and Soviet governments at a number of meetings. According to the final draft, a dam would be erected across the river at Hoa Binh. It was to be 128 m high and 700 m wide at its base. A hydropower plant to be installed in a hollowed-out rocky mountain would comprise eight turbines of an aggregate capacity of 1.92 million kw which would generate 8.4 billion kwh a year, thereby nearly doubling the present electricity output in the whole country and save 5 million tons of coal a year. (It should be recalled that the Hoover hydropower plant on the Colorado river in the USA, a project of worldwide fame half a century ago, had a capacity of only 1.32 million kw). A reservoir of 200 square kilometres in area and 6 billion cubic metres' capacity would irrigate 200,000 — 250,000 hectares of land. An end would be put to the floods and droughts that used to plague the farmers of the Red River delta. The river route from Haiphong port to Hoa Binh would be secure. In short, this would be for Vietnam a "project of the century", — one that could never have been built under a colonial or neo-colonial regime.

On 6, November 1979, one day before the 62nd anniversary of the Great October Revolution, the building of the Hoa Binh hydropower project, the largest in Southeast Asia, began with the earth-shaking explosions of rock-blasting dynamite charges. On 12 January 1983, convoy after convoy of huge Soviet-made trucks discharged concrete pyramids charges. On 12 January 1983, convoy and divert its waters into a man-made canal. On 9 January 1985, this canal was filled up and the water began flowing into mountain tunnels, where turbine generators would be assembled. Those are unforgettable landmarks in the taming of the Da river.

Of the 35,000 people who work here, a large number are Soviet experts belonging to 28 nationalities and coming from most Soviet republics. One of them, Professor Academician Malusev, who had worked for the building of the Aswan Dam on the Nile river in Egypt, was awarded a Labour Order, first class, by the State Council of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. Are also present here many leading experts who had participated in erecting large water-control works and hydropower plants of the Soviet Union. Experts who had worked on the Moscow underground railway look after the drilling of mountain tunnels; talented architects of the Republic of Georgia contribute their experience in constructing hillside

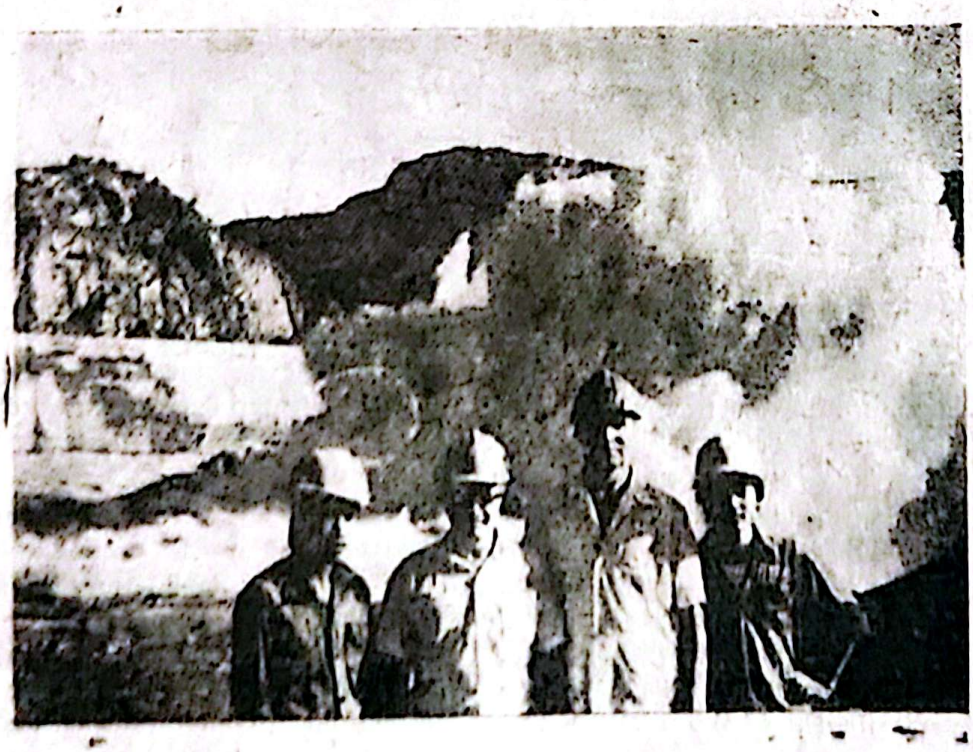
blocks of flats. Other experts come from Soviet Republics in Central Asia: Kirghizia, Uzbekistan, Tadjikistan... whose peoples have advanced to socialism starting from an even lower economic level than present-day Vietnam.

On the Vietnamese side, the core of the builders is naturally constituted by people who had worked on the Thac Ba project in the early sixties.

Together with their Soviet friends, they have recorded colossal achievements. At the construction site of the Hoa Binh hydropower plant there reigns feverish work. Three shifts work day and night, seven days a week, so that the first turbine generator can be commissioned by the end of this year. The ground has been prepared for the installation of the first turbine, and the room for the transformers has been completed. Two huge transformers weighing 80 tonnes each are already in place. Work is going apace on the energy channel, including water conduits, wells, pressure-regulating tank, etc., and the pouring of 5,000 cubic metres of concrete at 15 different places. These works, which would normally require 5-6 months, are to be completed in 100 days. A herculean task!

The assembly of machines calls for the greatest urgency. It is being done both in the open in the searing heat of the summer, and in the machine hall inside the mountain where the assemblers work in sweltering heat, artificial light, and lack of oxygen. Are already in place machine parts weighing hundreds of tons apiece: the 660-ton rotor of the generator, the 330-ton stator, the twist-chamber and the float-valve of more than 100 tonnes — all of them assembled with a tolerance measured in millimetres. By now, over 2,000 tonnes of equipment and machines have been assembled — nearly 60% of the assembly work, 80% for the assembly of the turbine generator. According to plan, by the end of October, the assembly will be completed of the 220 kv transmission line going out from the plant — the biggest high-voltage power line in Vietnam and of the float-valve of 300 tonnes controlling the discharge tunnel, after which water will be stored for electricity generating.

The first turbine generator will be commissioned by the end of 1988 and the whole project will be completed in the early years of the nineties.



Vietnamese workers and Soviet experts at the construction site.

Photo: HA MUI

Assessing the prospects of the Red River delta, French experts and scholars in colonial times were pessimistic. In their view, this overpopulated area could not escape its fate of eternal poverty; the backward peasants, ignorant of science and technique and deprived of the support of industry, could only lead a miserable life as their forefathers had done from time immemorial — perhaps an even worse fate. Population was to increase in a geometric progression while food production would be unable to follow even an arithmetic progression owing to natural calamities and recurring crop failures. Indeed that was the line of thought of all disciples of Malthus.

Following the trail blazed by the Great Russian October Revolution, the Vietnamese people, led by their Communist Party, overthrew the colonial and feudal yokes by staging the August 1945 Revolution. That was the historic turning-point leading to a new life for the peasants of the Red River delta.

MANPOWER AND EMPLOYMENT

Vietnam has a high rate of population growth: 2.08%. Half of its 64 million people are of working age this year. These figures are expected to be about 46 and 80 million respectively by the year 2000. The number of people of working age has been increasing owing to demographic growth. Here is the rate of increase in available manpower: 3.2% in 1960 — 1975, 3.37% in 1975 — 1980, 3.38% in 1980 — 1985, and an estimated 3.53% in 1986 — 1990, and 2.59% in 1990 — 2000. In sum, a big manpower potential.

However, because of slow scientific and technical progress, a rate of increase in manpower that rises above 2% is likely to lead to unemployment. Indeed, today in Vietnam jobs are not easy to come by. A total of twenty-six million people are now engaged in social production: 3.8 million or 14.7% in the State and joint State-private sector; 18.6 million or 71.5% in the collective (cooperative) sector; 3.6 million or 13.8% in the private, individual sector. This leaves about 6 million people with no jobs or only precarious jobs. In the towns, the number of those with unstable employment, is about 600,000 — 700,000 yearly, mostly young people. In the countryside, each of the 18 million peasants only work approximately 200 days a year, which means unused manpower equivalent to 6 million people. In the State sector, there is a considerable waste of manpower: many units can cut down on their personnel by 30 — 40% and the total number of redundancies may reach 800,000 — 900,000.

Our scientific and technical personnel number nearly 700,000, 250,000 of them with a college or post-graduate degree. However, they are not being rationally used.

Most of them work in central organs and in the cities; very few at the grassroots and district levels.

Moreover, 1 — 1.1 million people reach working age every year and add to the strained situation in employment. The repartition and use of manpower as well as the creation of jobs have become problems to be resolved in a "human strategy" devised by the Party and the State.

What is to be done to create employment and use manpower efficiently?

The question has been debated at many conferences and a number of solutions have been devised. They belong to three major categories:

— To develop a multi-component economy, with emphasis on those trades that require only small investments while giving quick returns;

— To redistribute the labour force and the population territorially; to build new economic zones;

— To broaden our external economic relations and rapidly develop cooperation in the field of labour supply with foreign countries;

Other measures should also be applied: to work out policies conducive to job-creation, and attracting manpower to labour-intensive branches and to remote areas. To provide information about vacancies and promote placement. This long-neglected measure has been recently applied in Ho Chi Minh City with the setting up of a placement bureau, which has attracted 6,000 applications in the first half of this year and found jobs for 3,700 people.

HONG SON

JOB CREATION IN A CITY DISTRICT

Difficulties and Snags

Hong Bang district in the port city of Haiphong comprises nine wards. Apart from Trai Chuoi, where live mostly factory and office workers in communal buildings, the other wards lie along city streets and have a composite population. Being an administrative and economic centre of the city, this district has to provide jobs to 3,500 — 4,000 adults with 500 — 700 more coming of age each year while the State and collective sectors can only absorb 10 — 12 % of that number. Job-creation, therefore, is regarded as the main task of the district administration and Party committee. There are many potentialities for employment in the district itself. It contains a number of big enterprises, like the port, a cement plant, several ship-building yards. Others make goods for export. Each year, they generate a lot of waste and scrap. They also hire contract labour for various services, e.g. handling goods for cold storage, packing, etc. In fact, some collectives and cooperatives have been providing services or collecting waste and scrap for reprocessing.

However, there are obstacles to the creation of stable employment. Due to the existence of several markets in the district, some people prefer to engage in peddling or acting as middlemen for commercial transactions, including illicit ones, instead of accepting offers of employment from the district authorities. A survey made early this year revealed that of the 3,593 unemployed people, 3,537 wished to have jobs with State-run offices and enterprises or with cooperatives — that is permanent, stable jobs with the attendant benefits. Of those people 70 % wanted to work with goods distribution and circulation agencies; 20% would like to go and work abroad; only 10 % were ready to accept whatever jobs were available.

In the view of district cadres responsible for providing employment, the main reasons for this situation are as follows: First, there is not yet an equitable policy for workers in different sectors. With comparable technical skills and the same labour expenditure those who work in State offices and enterprises receive more benefits, and their children are accepted in priority in crèches, kindergartens and schools — compared with those working in non-State sectors. In recent years a number of crèches and kindergartens in the district have catered only to children of State employees to whom, in addition, more stable food rations are ensured.

Second, while prices fluctuate wildly, payments to the personnel of cooperatives and service enterprises working for State corporations and government offices are very often delayed. This creates difficulties for their families and discourages them.

Third, the fact that as many as 70 % of the applicants want to work in goods distribution and circulation agencies is due to the larger incomes they get from their jobs compared with those working in the production sector. Owing to poor management, which contains many loopholes, employees of State stores and marketing cooperatives can often collude with dishonest traders and share the profits derived from illicit operations.

Fourth, employment in a number of cooperatives is unstable due to the irregular procurement by them of waste and scrap which they use as raw materials for their products. Thus a cooperative which has good "links" with a State industrial enterprise has a better chance of obtaining scrap and waste from it and securing a stable source of raw materials.

Initiatives of the Masses

Of course, time and more powers must be given a district administration for it to overcome the snags mentioned above. However, Hong Bang district has done its best to encourage popular initiative in this field with some success.

Thus the Hoa Son building cooperative in Trai Chuoi ward has organized a coal-mining unit about one hundred kilometres northwest of the city. In one year with the technical help of the Thong Nhat colliery in Quang Ninh province, which lent it some machinery, this unit removed 8,000 cubic metres of earth and stone, and discovered two coal veins capable of yielding more than 20,000 tonnes of coal a year (enough for Haiphong's industrial and household needs). In the first quarter of 1987, the cooperative delivered 3000 tonnes of coal to the Thong Nhat colliery.

Said Nguyen Truong Son, head of the cooperative and leader of its coal-mining team: "We've organized this unit to help create jobs in the ward. So far we've also set up building and repair teams for

(Continued on page 26)

TRADITION AND CULTURAL RENOVATION

Prof. DINH GIA KHANH

● Inheriting and making a selection among past cultural achievements ● Problems of modern culture ● For a better understanding of our cultural environment.

Along with the renewal in our thinking we should sum up the experience gained in building socialism, since 1917 in the Soviet Union and since 1945 in our country, and work out more comprehensive and more accurate conceptions of socialism and socialist culture in a world where different social systems still co-exist.

We have all along laid stress on the class character of culture. This is quite correct. However, a deeper analysis will reveal some inadequacy, and we need to reconsider the question. Human society in ancient times, i.e. 3,000 — 4,000 years ago, already had various forms of culture even though it was not yet divided into social classes. In future, there will probably be no more social classes in human society. Yet, culture will continue to develop at an ever higher tempo. In other words, in the hundreds of thousands of years that preceded our time and the millions of years that will succeed it, the period when society is divided into classes is but a very short episode. On the one hand, it should be noted that the purely human features of the classless society left very deep imprints on the subsequent class society. On the other, ever since society was divided into classes, the class character of culture has become obvious.

Only with a clear, unambiguous perception of this point can we handle correctly the relationship between tradition and cultural renovation in the building of a socialist culture.

In their efforts to build a socialist culture, Marxists have for long seen the need to inherit in a selective way cultural achievements of the past. However, we must continue to study the relationship between tradition and renovation, especially in the present renewal of our thinking when we are drawing experience from the building of socialism and are indeed striving to re-define socialism.

The scientific and technological revolution, which began in the fifties of this century, has brought about a fast development of the productive forces in the industrialized countries. However, in addition to the long-standing evils of capitalism, many new thorny problems such as the energy crisis, pollution and damage to the environment have arisen in the non-socialist world, first and foremost in the western countries. In addition to the danger now threatening the whole of mankind — nuclear war — other problems like the population explosion and food shortages are endangering the Third World. Quick and spontaneous urbanization, disintegration of the basic units of traditional society (village, commune, clan) and the advent of the so-called consumer society with such highly visible features as the fast changes in fashion and taste, the crazy pace in living, an open contempt for moral values, the family crisis and the generation gap... — such is the present situation, and not in the capitalist world alone. In developed socialist countries and even among some developing socialist countries, similar cultural problems have cropped up. Moreover, owing to modern transport and telecommunications means, capitalist culture is constantly seeping into socialist countries.

Among the many unhealthy ways in which the capitalist world is making its influence felt in the socialist world is that in which people try to handle the relationship between tradition and renovation. There are two extreme tendencies in the West in this respect. One is to repudiate all traditions which are considered to be suited only to the old « rhythm of life ». It is claimed that the world has shifted completely to the so-called "planetary rhythm" of the post-industrial and computer era. The other extreme is to advocate a "return to the roots", i.e, the past by idealizing the patriarchal society of the ancient Orient.

Of course, we don't agree with either of these two tendencies. Nevertheless, it is now clear that we

must inquire into the cultural situation in the capitalist world in order to determine what to adopt and what to reject in handling the relationship between tradition and renovation.

In addition to problems that are common to all socialist countries, Vietnam faces specific problems of its own. For instance, the contradiction between the ideology sprung from small-scale farming and that born of life in the ancient commune; the confusion between the need to fight bourgeois individualism and the making light of individual freedoms; the reliance on the motto upholding "collective mastery" to eschew individual responsibility, etc. Even some fine traditions might lead to unhealthy attitudes if not properly cultivated. Thus, patriotism if not well conceived might lead to big-nation chauvinism or narrow-minded nationalism, which is the antithesis of proletarian internationalism. To say that "nothing is more precious than independence and freedom" is to proclaim a great truth. But the notion of independence should be understood judiciously. Independence does not mean isolation.

Our planet has shrunk thanks to modern means of communications and transport and the achievements of modern science and technology. International exchanges are expanding exponentially. People are talking more and more of interdependence as well as of independence.

Above are only some of the urgent problems which must be solved if we are to handle correctly the relationship between tradition and renovation. Armed with the new, modern, Marxist method of thinking we must resolve all the social and cultural problems being posed to our country at the present stage and in the present-day world. Only then can we understand the milieu in which we are living and devise a way to adapt ourselves to it. Only then can we handle correctly the relationship between tradition and renovation.

Then we shall be able to transform tradition into strength and make it a driving force behind our progress to a bright future. ●

JOB CREATION...

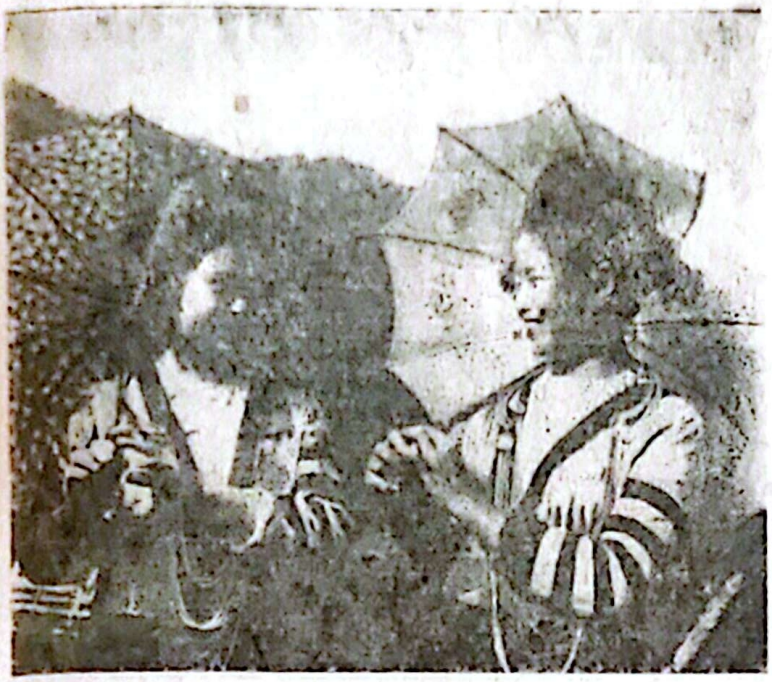
(Continued from page 24)

civilian housing. At first, the cooperative got some funds and materials from the ward and there was enough work for all. But in mid-1986 the cooperative faced many difficulties. The upper echelon could no longer supply us with capital and materials. A number of our customers also had their supply of funds and materials cut down, which prevented them from signing contracts with us. At that time we had more than 30 redundancies in our staff, young and unskilled for the most part. The Party committee and administrative authorities of the district asked the cooperative to look for jobs for them. A co-op member who had worked as a miner years ago succeeded in getting them hired as contract workers at Thong Nhat, whose management undertook to supply them with food and pay them according to the volume of work done.

According to the Hong Bang ward leadership this search for employment far from the ward could be done even more effectively. However, the initiative taken by the Hai Son cooperative has opened up promising prospect.

Other ways to create jobs have been devised. In 1986 more than 3,000 people found employment: 210 in State enterprises, 307 in cooperatives and 165 were sent abroad as guest workers. The remaining 2,750 found work on the spot as contract workers for State offices and enterprises, or supplying services to units under the departments of internal and external trade. Service teams have been organized, (10 — 12 teams in each ward) doing such jobs as repairing houses, knitting woollies, making clothes and packing material. Apart from obtaining employment in construction sites in the city and elsewhere in the province the ward has striven to develop the family economy which now occupies 5,455 households or 62 % of the total. To this end, an agency has been set up whose task is to look for job opportunities in State and collective units, study markets and consumers' tastes, collect waste and scrap from industrial and handicraft enterprises, and give guidance to production and service enterprises seeking to expand their activities. At the same time whenever necessary it helps in marketing products turned out by collectives and households.

MINH SON



H'MONG FOLK DANCE

Young H'Mong women on a festive day.

Photo: VNA

Numbering about 400,000, the H'mong national minority live mainly in Viet Bac and the Northwest, concentrated in the provinces of Hoang Lien Son and Ha Tuyen and intercalated with other nationalities in other provinces. Their habitat is rugged mountainous regions watered by forest streams. Their costumes are most varied in style, colour and decoration. Most graceful is the dress of young girls, who on market days, wear tight short jackets, ample flared skirts, slippers and turbans embroidered with brightly-coloured thread, showing off silver bracelets and bead necklaces, and holding an umbrella slantwise. In general H'mong people are honest, straightforward, and have an optimistic look on life.

Like other nationalities in Vietnam, they have an age-old culture with original features.

Since long, dancing is very popular among the H'mong, helping them as it does to show joy and happiness on festive occasions. Dancing keeps their soul pure and their body strong. They need a vigorous body to hunt wild animals and till the fields; their women want to keep their hands and fingers supple to do needle work and embroidery. A boy or a girl who dances well will easily find a marriage partner. That is why, besides such heirlooms as gongs, drums, blankets, copper pots, wine jars, a H'mong heritage also consists of dancing skills taught to children when they are mere toddlers. H'mong youth love to dance to tunes played on *Khen* panpipes and a young H'mong will always have a *khen* on his belt beside his bushknife.

The favourite dances of the H'mong are *gay tien, linh cha,* (paddy threshing), dan doang (playing the zither)... but the most original and popular ones are the umbrella dance and *khen* dance. The *khen* dance is as popular as the *xoe* dance among the Thai, the *sap* dance among the Muong and the *cham rong* dance among the Cham in the Central Highlands.

In spring, when peach and apricot trees bloom in the valleys, young H'mong girls clad in brightly coloured costumes and keeping their umbrellas spinning above their heads are surrounded by boy friends playing tunes on their *dan moi* and *dan tron*. The umbrella dance can be performed in groups or in pairs. A skilful dancer distinguishes herself by showing off the suppleness and agility of her hands. The climax comes when the musical instruments begin playing at a fast tempo and the dancers move their arms, legs and bodies ever more quickly to keep the rhythm. At such moments the lithe bodies of the girls are seen only in flashes among the wildly spinning umbrellas. The *khen* is an original musical instrument of the H'mong. It is played mostly on festive days and by boys to depict their tender feelings to girls. A folk song goes like this.

Your hands are skilled in needle work.
I love you
You love me...
If you have a feeling for me,
Come and be with me, for a night.
Your hands are skilled in spinning yarn,
If you have a feeling for me,
Come and be with me for a day.

As he plays the *khen*, the young man makes supple steps which grow quicker and quicker. He hops about, turns on himself, kicks up his legs. There is a large repertoire of *khen* dances whose number equals that of *khen* tunes. They grow ever more varied in style, with springy, supple and sometimes complicated steps. Whereas formerly in his attempt to win the heart of a young girl, a boy had only to play the *khen* well today he must also be a good dancer capable of expressing his feelings in graceful dancing movements as well as tender tunes.

A *khen* dance comprises a wide range of steps: walking, shuffling, turning, going backward, jumping, kicking the feet together, kicking up the heels, spinning while standing on one leg, turning while moving about, etc.

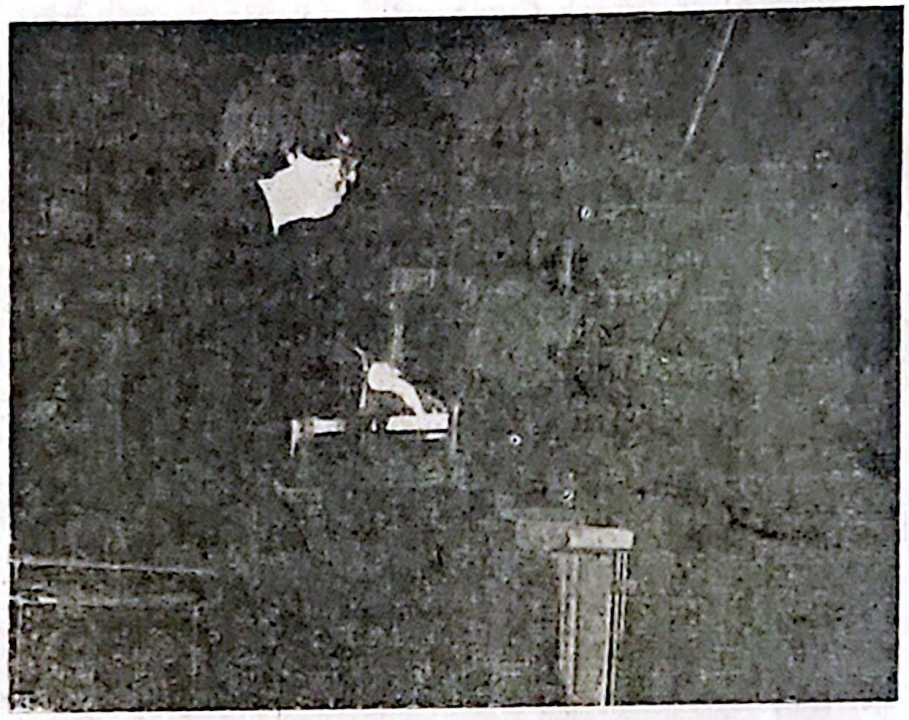
(Continued on page 29)

I WANT TO PLAY ALL GOOD MUSIC

That was the answer given by pianist Dang Thai Son to an interviewer during a visit to Japan.

At the invitation of the Tokyo National Conservatoire, he was teaching the piano there.

An interview was given by the artiste to the Japanese journal Carillon in January last. Herein below is a translation of the interview.



Question: Professor, when was your first contact with music?

Answer: I grew up in a musical environment. As both my parents are musicians I can say that I grew up amid the sounds of music. My parents, however, did not wish me to grow up into a musician because my two brothers and my sister had already chosen this vocation. Perhaps they thought that as things stood there was enough noise in the house (smile). That is why I was not taught the piano in earnest when I began playing it at the age of four. I only played simple songs, regarding the instrument as a toy. But soon I became absorbed in my playing. And when I was six my mother began giving me serious instruction.

Question: What kind of boy were you then?

Answer: I don't want to talk much about myself (smile), I was attracted not only by music but also by many things in life. A mild boy, I hated war and longed for peace. When other boys fought among themselves I always tried to talk them out of the fight. During the US war of destruction I practised with a not-so-good piano in a damp air-raid shelter...

Question: At that time the US war of destruction against North Vietnam had begun, so...

Answer: Yes, owing to the war of destruction we had to leave Hanoi and live for nearly five years in the countryside. It was then that I entered the Conservatoire at the age of seven. As there were few pianos at the place where it had been evacuated I could only practise about one hour each day. Some instruments had half of their keys out of order, while in others pedals had got stuck. Moreover, it was very wet in the shelter when it rained. In such conditions I could not truly concentrate on my work.

Question: Would you tell us about your study at the Moscow Conservatoire starting in 1977.

Answer: Things were hard in the first year. I did not know Russian. I had to learn many subjects and to settle many problems in connection with my work with the piano. I had almost no spare time. I lived in a student hostel. The practice pianos at the Conservatoire were not all good. To have a good one to work on I had to get up very early. I was in good health in my first year in Moscow. So I got up at five

each morning and was able to get a good instrument to practise on. But constantly worrying about getting a good piano distracted my mind. So I stopped getting up early in the morning and satisfied myself with working on pianos that were not very good.

Question: Now, let's talk about the Chopin competition. Before attending it, you must have passed preliminary Soviet competitions, didn't you?

Answer: Yes, I attended a preliminary competition and passed it with the highest honours, and was commended by the professors at the Tchaikovski Conservatoire. It seems that at that time the Conservatoire already thought that I would win a prize at the Chopin competition, for I received permission to practise with an orchestra and on a good piano... But nobody certainly thought that I would get the first prize, and with it the mazurka prize, and the solo and concerto prizes. When the first prize was announced, I was first informed by people from NHK Television — to my utter astonishment.

Question: Why did you decide to visit Japan?

Answer: First, because I wished to spend a year in Japan lecturing and learning to improve my performance. During my time here I can get a broad range of musical information. As systems, capitalist countries are different from socialist ones, and show different musical trends. Moreover, thanks to the great help accorded me by the Japanese National Conservatoire and Japanese friends I hope to be able to make some contribution during my sojourn.

Question: You have recently lectured to an enlarged audience of Japanese students. What do you think of them?

Answer: Technically, they have attained a fairly high level. I think they have read and rendered all that was in the musical piece being interpreted, and have played with complete assurance. But I have the feeling that their performance fell short of excellence when they failed to have their music speak its true voice. Then they would only be playing a musical piece. When listening to a great pianist one must feel what he wishes to convey to his audience.

Question: Do you regard some pianists as rivals?

Which one do you like best?

Answer: "Rival" is one of the words I thoroughly dislike. Music is art, not sport. The point is not whether an artiste is better than another, for such comparisons are irrelevant in art. Moreover, I don't have a cult for any musician, because I like all musicians and especially great ones. Some music critics say that Dang Thai Son has something romantic about him, but I don't like such set opinions. Now is the time for me to enlarge my repertoire. I am playing not only Chopin but also works by Debussy, Ravel, Prokofiev, Beethoven, Mozart...

Question: Finally, would you tell us about your aims and plans with regard to music?

Answer: For the moment, I want to play all renowned works. As I have studied for 10 years in the Soviet Union, I will of course play many Russian pieces. ●

H'MONG...

(Continued from page 27)

Flirting H'mong boys talk little but prefer to play tunes to their sweethearts on a *khen* or a *dan moi* (lip organ). On festive days, girls would go about in small groups, hiding their faces behind their umbrellas. A boy who wishes to make friend with one of them will play a tune on his *khen*. At a point, the girl will fold her umbrella and reward him with a smile. This means that he has succeeded in his attempt. More progress is achieved when they dance together to the tune of the *khen*, the girl's umbrella turning quickly, hiding her and her boyfriend as they move together. This means that they are now close together in heart and mind.

Thus two originally different dances, the umbrella dance for girls and the *khen* dance for boys, now merge into one, which is danced by a couple.

The *khen* dance when performed by groups of two or three boys is called a *khen* competition: the boys stand in a pair or a triangle and perform the dance which is of varying duration according to the stamina and skill of the performers. The winner is the one who performs difficult and beautiful steps which cannot be imitated or accompanied by the other (s). Such contests contribute to ceaselessly improving *khen* dances.

Just as lyricism is the dominant note in H'mong music, H'mong dancing is inclined to combine graceful and supple movements, except in the case of a *khen* competition when steps grow quick and vigorous as the performers vie with one another in skill and stamina. In general H'mong dances evoke the soft murmur of a forest stream and the twitter of birds and movements are quick and nimble. They may enrich our artistic treasure — the more so if our choreographers learn to improve upon them. In fact, H'mong dances have inspired many of the folk dances our troupes have been performing at home and abroad, with great success.

PHAN THU

PLETHORA OR SHORTAGE?

● Too many or too few university graduates in Vietnam? ● Irrational employment of college graduates ● A way out of the present situation.

Have we got too many or too few college graduates among our cadres? A judicious view of the situation will help us work out a proper training plan and a correct orientation for the development of higher education in the coming years. This will call for detailed and comprehensive investigations. These cannot be conducted as yet but a study of the distribution and employment of university graduates in the past can give us some idea of the true situation.

We all know that today no countries in the world can afford to be indifferent to the tempestuous development of science, and technology. All the more so in the case of the under-developed countries, which must take the fullest advantage of scientific and technical achievements in the world if they are to raise their peoples' living standards. The burden of this task falls on the cadres with a higher education.

At present the average number of college years per head of working people is between 0.23 and 1.05 in the developed countries but only 0.038 in our own. As a rule, a worker with technical training is 1.5 — 2 times more productive than one without such training. And yet, from 1981 to 1985 we recruited 840,000 workers for State enterprises and offices, 67% of whom (18.3 million) had received no technical training whatsoever. This is the reason for our low labour productivity. Vietnam is one of the countries in the world with the lowest number of medical doctors per unit of population. Many regions (mountainous regions, Mekong delta, Central Highlands) suffer from an acute shortage of college-level cadres. At the present rate, we won't be able in the next decades to make up for the losses caused by retirement and death. In a word, we are badly short of college-trained cadres.

And yet, young people who have graduated either in the country or abroad, are having difficulties finding jobs. Some people hold that we are having a plethora of engineers and doctors of science and that we must stop training more, at least for a time. According to figures released by the Ministry of Higher Education, of the students who had graduated from college before 1986, 2464 are still jobless (some had earned their degrees 7 or 10 years ago).

Below is a breakdown:

Name of higher-education establishment	Number of jobless graduates by 1986
Polytechnic College (Hanoi)	206
National Economy College	115
Construction College	76
Hanoi University	291
Mining and Geology College	49
Thai Nguyen Industrial College	134
School of Foreign Languages	105
Hue University	11
Economics College (Da Nang)	65
Communications and Transport College	172
Agricultural College No. 1	257
Agricultural College No. 2	46
Agricultural College No. 3	172
Industrial Arts College	110

By November 1987, the number of unemployed college graduates was 3162. This number may be even higher because many graduates who were given jobs later refused the work assigned to them or were not accepted by the enterprise or office to which they were sent. For instance by November 1987, although the various departments and provinces had asked for 272 graduates of Hanoi university, only 3 of them had joined their posts. At this university, the number of graduates awaiting employment makes up nearly three yearly batches of 300 each. At present it totals 78 %.

Before 1984, the State Planning Committee assigned college graduates to 150 enterprises or departments, including 50 under the central level administration and 40 in the provinces. But since 1984, for a variety of reasons, this employment procedure has stopped functioning, and the graduates have had to fend for themselves. Because of the lack of a comprehensive plan for socio-economic development and an adequate training program, during the five years in which they are at school, the students find themselves divorced from life and the changes in it.

For example, a few years ago, we decided to set up an oil and gas technology college, later reduced to two departments, one at the Geological College and one at the Polytechnic. But so far not all their graduates have found employment. Graduates from the departments of agricultural economics, economic mathematics, economic information (National Economy College), fundamental sciences (Hanoi University), Russian, Chinese, Japanese languages (Foreign languages College) still find themselves without jobs.

Even those who could teach in schools under the Ministry of Education, which is in fact facing a shortage of teachers, have not been accepted by it for a number of reasons. Though agriculture is regarded as the "forefront of the economic battle", in the last few years, the Ministry of Agriculture has not recruited any college graduates. While the four agricultural schools train every year from 1200 to 1400 agronomists, due to the incorrect application of the contractual system and the limitations put on the hiring by cooperatives of technical cadres, there are still very few university graduates working with farming co-ops. Of the 7000 cadres working in the judiciary service, few have gone through law courses and many local responsible cadres have not finished even the 6th class of elementary education. Meanwhile 300 graduates of the Law College cannot find jobs.

Since long, owing to the application of the bureaucratic subsidy-based system of management, we have paid little attention to the costs of college education and to the use of college-trained cadres. Government offices can employ as many college graduates as they please for they don't have to bear the costs of their training. In the major cities it suffices that some departments advertise an "offer of employment" for them to receive hundreds of applications. There was a time when higher-education establishments were free to take in as many students as they like because the costs of tuition, board and lodging for them were borne by the State. Every year the State paid billions of *dong* for the training and upkeep of the 7000 students in the schools under the Ministry of Higher Education alone. Government offices used college graduates in a most extravagant way as they did not have to foot the bill for their training.

An important factor contributing to the aggravation of this paradoxical situation — an excess of graduates coupled with a shortage of technical cadres with the right qualifications — is the poor quality of training, which has caused the graduates to fail to meet the requirements of society and the challenges posed by the powerful development of science and technology.

The technical formation provided in higher-education establishments is narrow, shallow and rigid, while prospective cadres should be equipped with comprehensive knowledge in their specialities. For instance in a district hospital a doctor should be able to tackle a wide range of ailments; and a district agricultural engineer should not be specialized in one crop or animal. Students of the literature department of Hanoi University are trained to be literary researchers and critics... but they are often employed in propaganda organs, press publications and press publishing houses. Generally speaking the present batches of university graduates lack dynamism, initiative and practical experience; their basic knowledge is shallow and they are slow to adapt to changing situations. Many of them are "neither worker nor engineer" and may be called "students of quaternary general education" — only one notch above the tertiary (i.e. senior secondary) education. The poor qualifications of the graduates are compounded by their employment, which is often irrational and affected by negative phenomena. Because of the lack of incentives and of fairness in the assignment of work to college graduates, the latter prefer to trust to luck or have recourse to the "pull" of relatives or family friends. Or they may try to "grease palms". All show a preference for jobs in the lowlands and the urban centres, and a reluctance to work in the highlands and out-of-the-way places. Many enterprises, while claiming that "there are no vacancies", may accept applicants in certain cases where they see fit to grant favours. Graduates who are assigned to an enterprise may end up joining another. Many will accept any work provided it allows them to stay in towns and cities.

Many students sprung from national minorities in the highlands refuse to go back to their native places to work and stubbornly seek to remain in town after graduation. As a result the highlands are woefully short of minority-born cadres.

Obviously this confused situation cannot be allowed to continue. Order and discipline must be restored in the distribution of jobs to college graduates. This can be done only on the basis of a correct understanding of the role played by science and technology and of the important place held by grey matter in economic progress. This urgent task is to be undertaken not only by the Ministry of Higher Education but by all branches of activity and all regions. In our opinion, we must do the following:

First, the Party and the State should work out a program of socio-economic development, determine the key branches, and devise a plan to train scientific and technical workers in those fields in priority. The Higher Education Ministry should clearly define the requirements of society, devise a wide range of training forms, raise the quality of training, both theoretical and practical, improve political and ideological education and upgrade both professional and ethical standards.

Secondly, the State should issue explicit regulations guaranteeing employment for the students according to their specialities after their graduation. It must amend irrational points in the present regulations to encourage college-trained cadres to accept work in agricultural cooperatives and in the collective and the household economic sectors. Following the changes brought to economic management, which now compel the production units to employ more scientific and technical personnel, it may be advisable to get them to contribute to the costs of their training.

Thirdly, appropriate policies should be devised to encourage students to work hard and also, after their graduation, to go and work in far-away places — the highlands, offshore islands, etc. Those of them who refuse their work assignments will suffer such sanctions as withdrawal of diplomas and repayment of school fees paid by the State, and may be sent back to their native places. Particularly, a struggle should be waged against favouritism and other illicit practices in the distribution of jobs to college graduates.

By so doing, we are sure to get out of our present paradoxical situation of concurrent plethora and shortage of college-trained cadres.

NGOC LAN

CHRONOLOGY • CHRONOLOGY

(15 Aug. — 14 Sept.)

AUGUST

15. A delegation of the Indian Nuclear Energy Committee, led by its Chairman M.R. Srinivasab, ends its visit to Vietnam as guest of the Vietnam National Institute of Nuclear Energy. The two sides sign a protocol on cooperation in the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

19. + A delegation of the Office of the National Assembly and the State Council led by its head, Vu Mao, member of the Communist Party of Vietnam Central Committee, and of the State Council, ends its working visit to the Soviet Union.

+ The SRV Ministry of Foreign Affairs issues a statement supporting the constructive position and goodwill attitude of the Soviet Union and Afghanistan regarding the implementation of the Geneva Agreement on Afghanistan and demanding that the United States and Pakistan seriously respect and carry out the provisions of this agreement. (See « Hanoi's Viewpoint » in this issue)

23-26. *Hanoi*: The Research Centre on Population and Human Resources in Vietnam holds a symposium on population resettlement. More than 60 reports deal with the orientation and practical experience of this work in Vietnam and suggest various forms of resettlement for key areas.

25. *Hanoi*: Reception of a shipment of medicines worth 5 million rupees as part of the gifts worth 10 million rupees given Vietnam by the Indian Government.

26. Sofia: On behalf of the SRV State Council and Council of Ministers, Nguyen Tien Thong, Vietnamese Ambassador to Bulgaria, confers Friendship Orders on 6 Bulgarian collectives and 5 social activists, and Friendship medals on 18 Party and State cadres for their contributions to the strengthening of friendship between the two countries, and for their active support to Vietnam in national construction and defence.

+ *Hanoi*: The Executive Committee of the Vietnam-Italy Friendship Association holds an enlarged meeting to sum up its work in 1987 and discuss the orientation for its activities in the coming period.

26-29. A Malaysian delegation, led by Abdul Ghafar Bin Baba, Deputy Prime Minister, pays an official visit to Vietnam. (See article in this issue)

28. The Australian Government sends emergency shipments of rice worth 600,000 Australian dollars as aid to Vietnam through WFP and the organization World Vision.

28-31. A delegation of the Republic of Indonesia, led by Minister of Information H.Harmoko, pays a friendship visit to Vietnam. It holds talks with its Vietnamese counterparts and meets Vietnamese leaders.

31. Aug-3. Sept. *West Berlin*: Vietnam attends the 26th Foreign Trade Fair where it displays export garments, handicraft and art products, and electronic appliances. Seven Vietnamese companies under the Light Industry Ministry sign with foreign partners export contracts worth 600,000 US dollars

SEPTEMBER

4. Opening of the 1988 International Autumn Fair in Leipzig. The Vietnamese stand displays art, handicraft, and knitwear products.

5. More than 800,000 teachers and 12,000,000 pupils throughout the country begin a new school-year.

5-11. A Vietnamese Party and State delegation led by Vo Chi Cong, Political Bureau member of the Communist Party of Vietnam Central Committee and President of the Council, attends the celebrations of the 40th National Day of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. On this occasion, on behalf of the SRV State Council, Vo Chi Cong confers a Gold Star Order on Kim Il Sung, General Secretary of the Workers' Party of Korea and President of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

5-10. Nicosia (Cyprus) A Vietnamese delegation, led by Dinh Nho Liem, first Deputy Foreign Minister, attends the foreign ministerial conference of non-aligned countries.

8. At the Vietnamese Embassy in the Soviet Union, the CPSU Central Committee presents the CPV Central Committee with copies of the book « Documents of the 6th Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam » published in Russian.

8-9. *Hanoi*: Holding of a symposium on "The New Women of Vietnam » which sums up ten years of activity of the movement: « The new woman in national construction and defence ».

9. A Vietnamese airliner crashes as it is about to land at Bangkok airport. Seventy-six people on board — 46 Vietnamese and 30 foreigners — are killed. The Vietnam General Department of Civil Aviation and other offices concerned immediately begin an investigation into the accident.

9-11. *Hanoi*: Vietnam-Laos-Kampuchea volleyball tournament. The men's and women's teams of Vietnam win the first prizes; the Kampuchean men's and women's teams take second place.

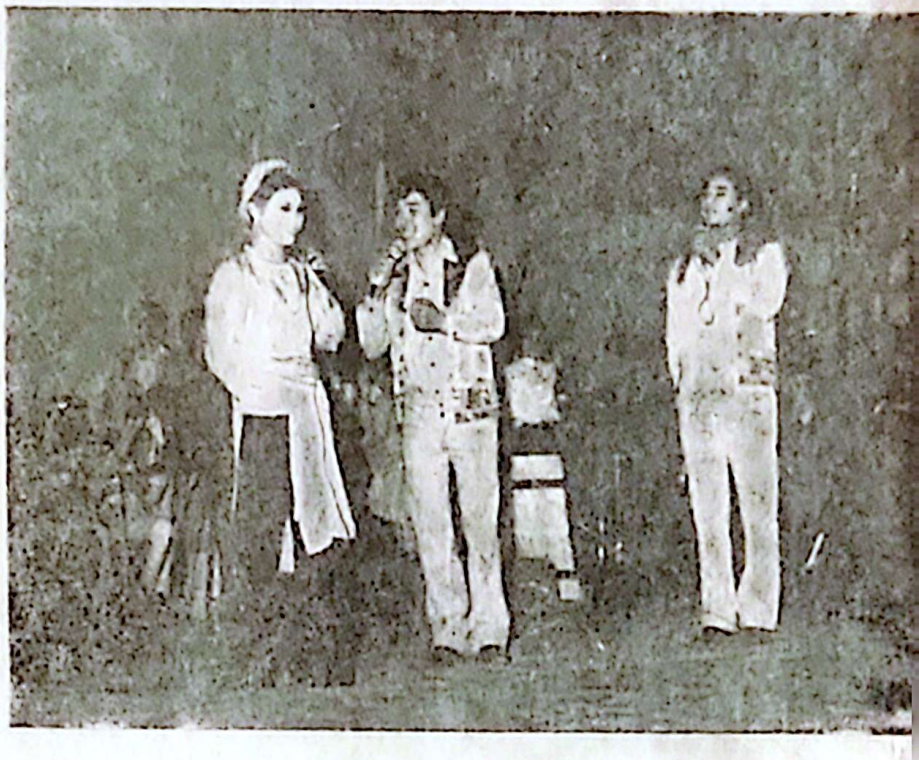
10-12. *Haiphong*: Vietnam-Laos-Kampuchea boxing tournament. Vietnam wins five gold, three silver and four bronze medals. Laos wins one gold, one silver and four bronze medals. Kampuchea wins two silver and four bronze medals.

VIETNAMESE SINGERS TO THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL FOLK ART FESTIVAL IN MOSCOW

(12 – 16 August 1988)

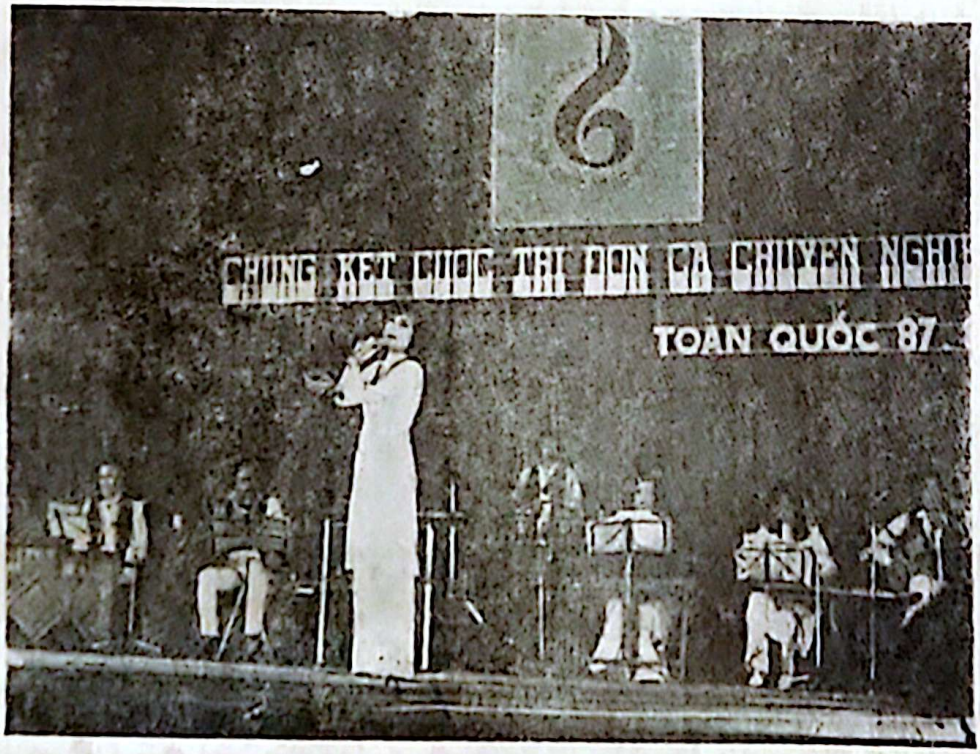
● *Hong Nam singing a Nghe Tinh folk song.*

Photo: NGOC TRUONG



● *Performing folk songs of North, Central and South Vietnam.*

Photo: TRAN AM



● *Thuy Dat singing a Southern folk song.*

Photo: NGOC TRUONG

● *Song of Friendship — Poster by Nguyen Loi*

11/1988

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